

We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Dean Inferrera



Sunday, April 16, 2017

Gospel: John 1:1-17

Tone

Epistle: Acts 1:1-8

Holy Pascha — The Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. [Beginning of the Pentecostarion]

Virgin Martyrs Agape, Irene and Chionia, in Illyria (304). Martyrs Leonidas, Chariessa, Nice (Nika, Victoria), Galina, Calista (Calisa), Nunechia, Basilissa, Theodora, and Irene, of Corinth (258). Monk Martyr Christopher of Dionysiou (Mt. Athos—1818). Hieromartyr Nicetas. The Weeping “IL’INSKO-CHERNIGOV” (1658) and the TAMBOV Icons of the Theotokos (1658).

The Holy Martyrs Agape, Irene, and Chionia

Troparion – Tone 1

Sisters in the flesh united in the Spirit, / you wrestled with the prince of evil and endured your martyrdom. / Holy and blest Agape, Irene, and Chionia, / pray to Christ our God to save our souls.

Kontakion – Tone 3

Bright mirrors of virginity, / radiant with your martyrdom, / you fill the Church with light and dispel the darkness of evil, / Agape, Irene, and Chionia, Christ’s precious jewels.



***Holy Pascha — The Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
[Beginning of the Pentecostarion]***

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Andrew Morris, on his birthday offered by his grandmother Lore Stefy.

Robby Morris, on his birthday offered by his mother-in-law Lore Stefy.

Christopher Dawson, on his birthday offered by his grandparents Sub-Deacon Edward & Holly Dawson.

Fr. Matthew, on his birthday, offered by his family.

Archpriest Nicholas Molodyko-Harris, who underwent surgery to treat an infected knee replacement, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

Father Theodore Gregory, presently receiving medical treatment, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

Liturgical Schedule

Saturday, April 15th

11:30 pm: Holy Pascha Vigil
Nocturns, Matins, Divine
Liturgy

Saturday, April 22nd

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, April 23rd

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, April 29th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, April 30th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, May 6th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, May 7th

9:30 am: No Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
9:45 am: General
Confession
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors

***Lore Stefy, Searfoorce
Family***

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 8th Tone:

This is the day which the Lord has made! / Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

(Psalm 117:24)

vs. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever!

(Psalm 117:1)

Epistle: Acts 1:1-8

In the first book, O Theophilos, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

Alleluia in the 4th Tone:

Thou didst arise, O Lord, and have mercy on Zion.

(Psalm 101:14)

vs. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the earth.

(Psalm 101:20)

Gospel: John 1:1-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.



Holy Pascha — The Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. [Beginning of the Pentecostarion]

Enjoy ye all the feast of faith; receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness.
(Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom, read at Paschal Matins)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith. Saint Paul says that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then our preaching and faith are in vain (I Cor. 15:14). Indeed, without the resurrection there would be no Christian preaching or faith. The disciples of Christ would have remained the broken and hopeless band which the Gospel of John describes as being in hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They went nowhere and preached nothing until they met the risen Christ, the doors being shut (John 20: 19). Then they touched the wounds of the nails and the spear; they ate and drank with Him. The resurrection became the basis of everything they said and did (Acts 2-4): “. . . for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have” (Luke 24:39).

The resurrection reveals Jesus of Nazareth as not only the expected Messiah of Israel, but as the King and Lord of a new Jerusalem: a new heaven and a new earth.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . the holy city, new Jerusalem. And I heard a great voice from the throne saying “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. . . He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away (Rev. 21:1-4).

In His death and resurrection, Christ defeats the last enemy, death, and thereby fulfills the mandate of His Father to subject all things under His feet (I Cor. 15:24-26).

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing (Rev. 5: 12)

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

The Christian faith is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church. True celebration is always a living participation. It is not a mere attendance at services. It is communion in the power of the event being celebrated. It is God’s free gift of joy given to spiritual men as a reward for their self-denial. It is the fulfillment of spiritual and physical effort and preparation. The resurrection of Christ, being the center of the Christian faith, is the basis of the Church’s liturgical life and the true model for all celebration. This is the chosen and holy day, first of Sabbaths, king and lord of days, the feast of feasts, holy day of holy days. On this day we bless Christ forevermore (Irmos 8, Paschal Canon).

PREPARATION

Twelve weeks of preparation precede the “feast of feasts.” A long journey which includes five pre-lenten Sundays, six weeks of Great Lent and finally Holy Week is made. The journey moves from the self-willed exile of the prodigal son to the grace-filled entrance into the new Jerusalem, coming down as a bride beautifully adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2) Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and study are the means by which this long journey is made.

Focusing on the veneration of the Cross at its midpoint, the Lenten voyage itself reveals that the joy of the resurrection is achieved only through the Cross. “Through the cross joy has come into all the world,” we sing in one paschal hymn. And in the paschal Troparion, we repeat again and again that Christ has trampled down death—by death! Saint Paul writes that the name of Jesus is exalted above every name because He first emptied Himself, taking on the lowly form of a servant and being obedient even to death on the Cross (Phil. 2:5-11). The road to the celebration of the resurrection is the self-emptying crucifixion of Lent. Pascha is the Passover from death to life.

Yesterday I was buried with Thee, O Christ.

Today I arise with Thee in Thy resurrection.

Yesterday I was crucified with Thee:

Glorify me with Thee, O Savior, in Thy kingdom (Ode 3, Paschal Canon).

THE PROCESSION

The divine services of the night of Pascha commence near midnight of Holy Saturday. At the Ninth Ode of the Canon of Nocturn, the priest, already vested in his brightest robes, removes the Holy Shroud from the tomb and carries it to the altar table, where it remains until the leave-taking of Pascha. The faithful stand in darkness. Then,

one by one, they light their candles from the candle held by the priest and form a great procession out of the church. Choir, servers, priest and people, led by the bearers of the cross, banners, icons and Gospel book, circle the church. The bells are rung incessantly and the angelic hymn of the resurrection is chanted.

The procession comes to a stop before the principal doors of the church. Before the closed doors the priest and the people sing the Troparion of Pascha, “Christ is risen from the dead...”, many times. Even before entering the church the priest and people exchange the paschal greeting: “Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!” This segment of the paschal services is extremely important. It preserves in the experience of the Church the primitive accounts of the resurrection of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. The angel rolled away the stone from the tomb not to let a biologically revived but physically entrapped Christ walk out, but to reveal that “He is not here; for He has risen, as He said” (Matt. 28:6).

In the paschal canon we sing:

Thou didst arise, O Christ, and yet the tomb remained sealed, as at Thy birth the Virgin’s womb remained unharmed; and Thou has opened for us the gates of paradise (Ode 6).

Finally, the procession of light and song in the darkness of night, and the thunderous proclamation that, indeed, Christ is risen, fulfill the words of the Evangelist John: “The light shines in darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:5).

The doors are opened and the faithful re-enter. The church is bathed in light and adorned with flowers. It is the heavenly bride and the symbol of the empty tomb:

Bearing life and more fruitful than paradise

Brighter than any royal chamber,

Thy tomb, O Christ, is the fountain of our resurrection (Paschal Hours).

MATINS

Matins commences immediately. The risen Christ is glorified in the singing of the beautiful canon of Saint John of Damascus. The paschal greeting is repeatedly exchanged. Near the end of Matins the paschal verses are sung. They relate the entire narrative of the Lord’s resurrection. They conclude with the words calling us to actualize among each other the forgiveness freely given to all by God:

This is the day of resurrection.

Let us be illumined by the feast.

Let us embrace each other.

Let us call “brothers” even those who hate us,

And forgive all by the resurrection. . .

The sermon of Saint John Chrysostom is then read by the celebrant. The sermon was originally composed as a baptismal instruction. It is retained by the Church in the paschal services because everything about the night of Pascha recalls the Sacrament of Baptism: the language and general terminology of the liturgical texts, the specific hymns, the vestment color, the use of candles and the great procession itself. Now the sermon invites us to a great reaffirmation of our baptism: to union with Christ in the receiving of Holy Communion.

If any man is devout and loves God, let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast. . . the table is fully laden; feast you all sumptuously. . . the calf is fatted, let no one go hungry away. . .

THE DIVINE LITURGY

The sermon announces the imminent beginning of the Divine Liturgy. The altar table is fully laden with the divine food: the Body and Blood of the risen and glorified Christ. No one is to go away hungry. The service books are very specific in saying that only he who partakes of the Body and Blood of Christ eats the true Pascha. The Divine Liturgy, therefore, normally follows immediately after paschal Matins. Foods from which the faithful have been asked to abstain during the Lenten journey are blessed and eaten only after the Divine Liturgy.

THE DAY WITHOUT EVENING

Pascha is the inauguration of a new age. It reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is our taste, in this age, of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. Something of this new and unending day is conveyed to us in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Bright Week, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day. Together they comprise the symbol of the new time in which the Church lives and toward which she ever draws the faithful, from one degree of glory to another.

O Christ, great and most holy Pascha.

O Wisdom, Word and Power of God,

grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the never-ending day of Thy kingdom
(Ninth Ode, Paschal Canon).
The V. Rev. Paul Lazor
New York, 1977



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, there is the Blessing of the Baskets.



NY/NJ Diocese News

Archpastoral Letter for Great and Holy Pascha 2017

Dearly Beloved Members of our Diocesan Family: Christ is Risen! – Indeed He is Risen!

Today we celebrate the Feast of Feasts! Today we recall the greatest event in human history, without which St. Paul tells us, “our faith is in vain” (I Cor. 15:14). Today we rejoice in the incomparable news of the Resurrection of our Lord from His three days in the tomb: “CHRIST IS RISEN! – INDEED HE IS RISEN!”

The Scriptural accounts of the Resurrection, given us by the four evangelists, were written in the second part of the first century – between the years 50 and 100 A.D. They are the work of the same generation who had witnessed the event ... the apostles themselves and their immediate successors. They bear testimony to the faith held by the earliest Christian community at Jerusalem from the very beginning of its existence (Mark 16:6).

Like all sincere and authentic witnesses, the evangelists and St. Paul give us accounts of the Resurrection that confirm each other, yet they differ in details. Each author has a personal point of view. Each one, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wants to emphasize this or that aspect, or some particular point which impressed him the most. While their perspectives vary, three main points stand out clearly in all of the accounts.

First, the Empty Tomb. At dawn, the first day after the Sabbath, meaning Sunday, some of the women who followed Christ came to Jesus’ tomb, bringing perfumes to anoint His Body, as was the Jewish custom: they were Mary Magdalene, Mary the Theotokos – described by St. Luke as “the mother of James” – along with Salome, Joanna, and “the other women”. They found that the huge rock which had blocked the tomb had been rolled away, and the tomb was empty! Mary Magdalene immediately went to tell Peter and John, who came running to the tomb. John, the younger, arrived first but did not enter without Peter. Peter “went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, which had been on His head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself” (John 20:6-7). While Peter returned home very pensive, John “went in also; and he saw and believed” (John 20:8).

Second, the Announcement of the Angels. The holy women were to be witnesses of an event attested to by all four evangelists: the appearance of angels. These messengers from God were the first to announce the good news of the Resurrection to the myrrh-bearing women: “Do not be afraid ... You seek Jesus Who was crucified ... He is not here, for He is Risen, even as He said ... Come, see the place where He lay.” And then they instructed the women, “Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and behold, He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Lo, I have told you” (Matthew 28:6-7; Mark 16:6-7; and Luke 24:5-7).

Third, the Appearances of the Risen Christ. Our Lord appeared many times to several different people after His glorious Resurrection from the dead. The New Testament records at least 13 such times when He appeared after rising from the tomb. He appeared to: Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-17); the myrrh-bearing women (Matthew 28:9-10); St. Peter the Apostle (Luke 24:34; I Cor. 15:5); the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13-32); His disciples while they were sitting at the table (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23; I Cor. 15:5); St. Thomas the Apostle (John 20:26-29); His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias (John 21:1-24); more than 500 of His followers at one time (I Cor. 15:6); St. James the Apostle (I Cor. 15:7); the

Apostles at Bethany before His Ascension into Heaven (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:4-6); the Eleven Apostles on the mountain of Galilee at His Ascension (Matthew 28:17); Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul the Apostle (I Cor. 16:8); and the Apostle, Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen, while he was being stoned to death

(Acts 7:55-56). From these historical facts, we see that Christ did rise bodily from the dead, that He is truly risen from the grave; that He does live forever (Hebrews 7:25; Revelation 1:7).

So great were these confirmations of the Savior’s Resurrection that Melito of Sardis would write this in his Homily on Pascha in the second century: “The Lord, having put on human nature, and having suffered for those who suffered, having been bound for those who were bound, and having been buried for those who were buried, is risen from the dead, and loudly proclaims this message: ‘... I am your pardon. I am the Passover which brings salvation. I am the Lamb slain for you. I am your lustral bath. I am your life. I am your resurrection. I am your light, I am your salvation, I am your King. It is I Who bring you up to the heights of heaven. It is I who will give you the resurrection there. I will show you the Eternal Father. I will raise you up with My own right hand.’”

Now, after nearly two thousand years have passed since the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, how are we affected by this event today? How does the “forgiveness of sins” for which Jesus died upon the Cross become the forgiveness of our sins today? How does the eternal life of the Risen One, Who will never die again, become our eternal life? How does Christ’s victory over death deliver us from death? How does everything that the Lord Jesus did for men whom He loved so much benefit the people of our time? How can the gift of God which He brought be effectively received by us today? How can we appropriate it, make it our own ... such that His Resurrection becomes our resurrection ... so that His union with the Father becomes our reconciliation with God ... such that His Life becomes our life?

The answer is given in the Nicene Creed which we recite so often: “I believe in one baptism for the remission of sins.” The Death and Resurrection of Christ are made real to us through our Baptism. It is through our Baptism that we are united to His Death, so that we may participate in His Resurrection (Romans 6, which is read at everyone’s Baptism). It is in the Sacrament of Baptism that we are “planted together” with the Risen Christ; it is the Mystery of Baptism which grafts us unto Him.

Beloved, Baptism is not an act of magic. The great mystery which the Holy Spirit accomplishes in Baptism becomes part of one’s consciousness only through “synergy” – literally, working together with God – on the part of the baptized person. In order for the baptized individual to truly attain the image of Christ, to really become a Christian, a whole lifetime in the Church is needed. During this lifetime of faith, the action of Christ and the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the baptized person can gradually penetrate into all the nooks and crannies of the Christian believer’s heart and soul, body and spirit.

On this Glorious Feast of Pascha, let each one of us recommit ourselves to the Risen Savior through the renewal of the promises made at our Baptism. We need to do this, for we have all fallen short of the Christ-like life we should live every day; we have often forgotten Our Lord by neglecting to be constant in prayer, in divine services, in fasting, in almsgiving, in obedience to the commandments. We have allowed ourselves to be pulled away from Him by the world, by our schedules, by our will. Let us repeat on this Day of Resurrection and every day the words of the Sacrament that was our Personal Pascha, the beginning of our personal salvation: “I renounce Satan and all his works ... I unite myself to Christ ... I believe in Him as King and God ... I worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, one in essence and undivided.”

It is my sincere hope and fervent prayer that, in return for this renewal of our personal faith in our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, on this Day of His Resurrection, He Who is the God who loves us more than we love ourselves, will bless each and every one of you with all the good things that come from His hands.

With my humble prayers, my Archpastoral blessing and my sincere love,

+*Michael*

Archbishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

The Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon on the Great and Holy Pascha 2017

To the Venerable Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, Monastics, Distinguished Stewards, and the entire family of the Orthodox Church in America:

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

The radiant day of the Resurrection of Christ has dawned and our Paschal celebrations have bathed us in the glorious light of renewal and regeneration. Today is a completely new day, a day which began

when the divine brilliance pierced and dispelled the darkness of Hades and ended with the remarkable explosion which took place when Eternal Life crushed death and corruption.

On this new and bright day, our faith is renewed along with that of the Myrrh-bearing Women standing by the open tomb; our hope is confirmed along with that of the Apostles on the road to Emmaus; and our love is strengthened along with that of the Mother of God who remained ever at the side of her Son. Even if we count ourselves among the numbers of those who previously denied or deserted the crucified Lord, such hesitation or shame cannot withstand the force of the new life of this day.

We know too well that there is no human being who lives and yet does not sin, and the consequences of the Fall are reflected in a world overshadowed by war, terrorism, and human misery. Nevertheless, this dark reality loses its hold on us today because we have tasted of the new drink from the fountain of incorruption which fills us with spiritual courage and divine hope.

This courage and hope are not simply fleeting emotions of the moment but rather an experience of the life of the risen Lord Who fills our hearts with such joy that every day and every moment of our existence we can sing paschal hymns such as this:

*How divine! How beloved!
How sweet is Thy voice, O Christ!
For Thou hast faithfully promised to be with us
To the end of the world.
Having this as our anchor of hope,
We the faithful rejoice.*

With my Archpastoral blessing and love in the Risen Lord,
+ Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitn of All America and Canada

Holy Fire to be delivered to America for first time

Moscow, April 14, 2017



The Holy Fire, which descends every year on the eve of the Orthodox feast of Pascha in Jerusalem, will be delivered to the various corners of the Earth, with the support of the Russian St. Andrew the First-Called Foundation, including, for the first time this year, to the United States of America.

“It is planned to deliver this sacred blessing for the first time to the US, and we’ve already received permission to transport the lampadas with the Holy Fire on board a plane,” the foundation’s press service reported to Interfax-Religion today. The Holy Fire is being brought to the US by the initiative of parishioners of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

According to the site of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, the Holy Fire will be ceremoniously greeted at 12:05 pm on Pascha Sunday at JFK Airport. From there it will be delivered to the Church of the Mother of God “Inexhaustible Cup” in Brighton Beach for Agape Vespers, where it will be distributed to the faithful.

At 3:00 PM the Holy Fire will be taken to St. Seraphim Memorial Church in Sea Cliff, NY for Agape Vespers and at 5:00 pm to the Synodal Cathedral of Our Lady “of the Sign” in New York City, where it will be ceremoniously greeted by His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion and the cathedral clergy before the celebration of the hierarchal Agape Vespers.

The Holy Fire will be available to parish rectors all of Bright Week. Advance notification is requested.

Since 2003 the Holy Fire has then been taken to various countries as part of the St. Andrew’s Foundation’s “Pray for Peace for Jerusalem” program, in which Orthodox believers from Russia, Israel, Serbia, Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, the USA, and other nations have joined the foundation’s delegates and the patriarch of Jerusalem to pray for peace in the Holy City.

The Holy Fire is traditionally brought to the Paschal service at Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow and from there throughout Russia. In 2016, the fire was taken to 53 Russian and 11 international cities.

As previously reported, the Holy Fire will also be delivered to London for the first time.

Updated April 15 at 1:40 PM to include the schedule of the Holy Fire in America.

15 / 04 / 2017

How the Holy Light Descends Upon the Holy Sepulchre

Russian Abbot Daniil



The following is a description of the Holy Light, which descends upon the Holy Sepulchre, as the Lord vouchsafed to show it to me, his wicked and unworthy servant. For in very truth I have seen with my own sinful eyes how that Holy Light descends upon the redeeming Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many pilgrims relate incorrectly the details about the descent of that Holy Light. Some say that the Holy Ghost descends upon the Holy Sepulchre in the form of a dove, others that it is lightning from heaven which kindles the lamps above the Sepulchre of the Lord. This is all untrue, for neither dove nor lightning is to be seen at that moment; but the Divine grace comes down unseen from heaven, and lights the lamps of the Sepulchre of our Lord. I will only describe it in

perfect truth as I have seen it.

On Holy Friday, after Vespers, they clean the Holy Sepulchre and wash all the lamps that are there; they fill the lamps with pure oil without water and after having put in the wicks, leave them unlighted they affix the seals to the Tomb at the second hour of the night. At the same time they extinguish all the lamps and wax candles in every church in Jerusalem. Upon that same Friday, at the first hour of the day, I, the unworthy, entered the presence of Prince Baldwin, and bowed myself to the ground before him. Seeing me, as I bowed, he bade me, in a friendly manner, come to him, and said, “What dost thou want, Russian abbot?” for he knew me and liked me, being a man of great kindness and humility and not given to pride. I said to him, “My prince and my lord! For the love of God, and out of regard for the Russian princes, allow me to place my lamp on the Holy Sepulchre in the name of the whole Russian country.” Then with peculiar kindness and attention he gave me permission to place my lamp on the Sepulchre of the Lord, and sent one of his chief retainers with me to the custodian of the Resurrection, and to the keeper of the keys of the Holy Sepulchre. The custodian and the keeper of the keys directed me to bring my lamp filled with oil. I thanked them, and hastened, with much joy, to purchase a very large glass lamp; having filled it with pure oil, I carried it to the Holy Sepulchre towards evening, and was conducted to the afore-mentioned keeper, who was alone in the chapel of the Tomb. Opening the sacred portal for me, he ordered me to take off my shoes; and then, having admitted me barefooted to the Holy Sepulchre, with the lamp that I bore, he directed me to place it on the Tomb of the Lord. I placed it, with my sinful hands, on the spot occupied by the sacred feet of our Lord Jesus Christ; the lamp of the Greeks being where the head lay, and that of St. Sabbas and all the monasteries in the position of the breast; for it is the custom of the Greeks and of the Monastery of St. Sabbas to place their lamps there each year. By God's grace these three lamps kindled on that occasion, but not one of those belonging to the Franks, which hung above, received the light. After having placed my lamp on the Holy Sepulchre, and after having adored and kissed, with penitence and pious tears, the sacred place upon which the body of our Lord Jesus Christ lay, I left the Holy Tomb filled with joy, and retired to my cell.

On the morrow, Holy Saturday, at the sixth hour of the day, everyone assembles in front of the Church of the Holy Resurrection; foreigners and natives people from all countries, from Babylon, from Egypt, and from every part of the world, come together on that day in countless numbers; the crowd fills the open space round the church and round the place of the Crucifixion. The crush is terrible, and the turmoil so great that many persons are suffocated in the dense crowd of people who stand, unlighted tapers in hand, waiting for the opening of the church doors. The priests alone are inside the church, and priests and crowd alike wait for the arrival of the Prince and his suite; then, the doors being opened, the people rush in, pushing and jostling each other, and fill the church and the galleries, for the church alone could not contain such a multitude. A large portion of the crowd has to remain outside round Golgotha and the place of the skull, and as far as the spot where the crosses were set up; every place is filled with an innumerable multitude. All the people, within and without the church, cry ceaselessly, “Kyrie Eleison” (Lord, have mercy upon us); and this cry is so loud that the whole building resounds and vibrates with it. The faithful shed torrents of tears; even he who has a heart of stone cannot refrain from weeping; each one, searching the innermost depths of his soul, thinks of his sins, and says secretly to himself, “Will my sins prevent the descent of the Holy

Light?” The faithful remain thus weeping with heavy heart; Prince Baldwin himself looks contrite and greatly humbled; torrents of tears stream from his eyes; and his suite stand pensively around him near the high altar, opposite the Tomb.

Saturday, about the seventh hour, Prince Baldwin, with his suite, left his house, and, proceeding on foot towards the Sepulchre of our Lord, sent to the hospice of St. Sabbas for the abbot and monks of St. Sabbas; the abbot, followed by the monks, thereupon set out for the Holy Sepulchre, and I, unworthy, went with them. When we reached the Prince we all saluted him; he returned our salute and directed the abbot and me, the lowly one, to walk by his side, whilst the other abbots and the monks went in front, and the suite followed behind. We thus reached the western door of the Church of the Resurrection, but such a dense crowd obstructed the entrance that we could not get in. Prince Baldwin thereupon ordered his soldiers to disperse the crowd and open a way for us; this they did by clearing a lane to the Tomb, and we were able in this manner to pass through the crowd. We reached the eastern door of the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord, and the Prince, who came after us, took his post to the right, near the railing of the high altar, in front of the eastern door of the Tomb; at that spot there is a raised place for the Prince. The Prince ordered the Abbot of St. Sabbas to take up a position beyond the Tomb, with his monks and the orthodox priests; as for me, the lowly one, he directed me to place myself higher up, above the doors of the Holy Sepulchre, in front of the high altar, so that I could see through the doors of the Tomb; these doors, three in number, were sealed up with the royal seal. The Latin priests stood by the high altar.

At the eighth hour the Orthodox priests, who were over the Holy Sepulchre, with the clergy, monks, and hermits, commenced chanting the Vespers; and the Latins, by the high altar, began to mumble after their manner. Whilst all were thus singing I kept my place and attentively watched the doors of the Tomb. When they commenced reading the paramia for Holy Saturday during the reading of the first lesson, the bishop, followed by the deacon, left the high altar, and going to the doors of the Tomb, looked through the grille, but, seeing no light, returned. When they commenced reading the sixth lesson of the paramia, the same bishop returned to the door of the Holy Sepulchre, but saw no change. All the people, weeping, then cried out “Kyrie Eleison” which means, “Lord, have mercy upon us!” At the end of the ninth hour, when they commenced chanting the Canticle of the passage (of the Red Sea), “Cantabo Domino,” a small cloud, coming suddenly from the east, rested above the open dome of the church; fine rain fell on the Holy Sepulchre, and wet us and all those who were above the Tomb. It was at this moment that the Holy Light suddenly illuminated the Holy Sepulchre, shining with an awe-aspiring and splendid brightness. The bishop, who was followed by four deacons, then opened the doors of the Tomb, and entered with the taper of Prince Baldwin so as to light it first at the Holy Light; he afterwards returned it to the Prince, who resumed his place, holding, with great joy, the taper in his hands. We lighted our tapers from that of the Prince, and so passed on the flame to everyone in the church.

This Holy Light is like no ordinary flame, for it burns in a marvelous way with indescribable brightness, and a ruddy color like that of cinnabar. All the people remain standing with lighted tapers, and repeat in a loud voice with intense joy and eagerness: “Lord, have mercy upon us!” Man can experience no joy like that which every Christian feels at the moment when he sees the Holy Light of God. He who has not taken part in the glory of that day will not believe the record of all that I have seen. It is only wise, believing men who will place complete trust in the truth of this narrative, and who will hear with delight all the details concerning the holy places. He who is faithful in little will also be faithful in much; but to the wicked and incredulous the truth seems always a lie. God and the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord bear witness to my stories and to my humble person; so do my companions from Russia, Novgorod, and Kiev: Iziaslav Ivanovitch, Gorodislav Mikhailovitch, the two Kashkitch, and many others who were there the same day.

But to return to my narrative: Directly the light shone in the Holy Sepulchre the chant ceased, and all, crying out “Kyrie Eleison,” moved towards the church with great joy, bearing the lighted tapers in their hands, and protecting them from the wind. Everyone then goes home; and the people after lighting the lamps of the churches with their tapers, remain in them to terminate the Vespers; whilst the priests alone, and without assistance, finish the Vespers in the great Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Carrying the lighted tapers, we returned to our monastery with the abbot and the monks; we finished the Vespers there and then retired to our cells, praising God for having condescended to show us unworthy ones His Divine grace. The morning of Holy Sunday, after having chanted the matins, exchanged kisses with the abbot and monks, and received absolution, we started about the first hour of the day for the Holy Sepulchre; the abbot cross in hand, and all the monks singing the hymn, “Immortal One, Thou hast deigned to go down into the Tomb.” Having entered the Holy Sepulchre, we covered the life-giving tomb of the Lord with kisses and scorching tears; we breathed with ecstasy the perfume which the presence of the Holy Ghost had left; and we gazed in admiration on the lamps which still burned with a bright and marvelous splendor. The custodian and the keeper of the keys told us, and the abbot, that the three lamps [placed below on the Holy Sepulchre] had kindled. The five other lamps suspended above were also burning, but their light was different from that of the three first, and

had not that marvelous brightness. We afterwards left the tomb by the west door, and, having proceeded to the high altar, kissed the Orthodox and received absolution. We then, with the abbot and the monks, left the Temple of the Holy Resurrection, and returned to our monastery to rest until it was time for Liturgy.

The third day after the Resurrection of our Lord I went, after Liturgy, to the keeper of the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, and said, “I wish to take away my lamp.” He received me kindly, and made me enter the Tomb quite alone. I saw my lamp on the Holy Sepulchre still burning with the flame of that holy light; I prostrated myself before the sacred Tomb, and, with penitence, covered the sacred place where the pure body of our Lord Jesus Christ lay with kisses and tears. I afterwards measured the length, width, and height of the Tomb as it now is a thing which no one can do before witnesses. I gave (the keeper of the keys) of the Tomb of the Lord as much as I could, and offered him, according to my means, a small, poor gift. The keeper of the keys, seeing my love for the Holy Sepulchre, pushed back the slab that covers the part of the sacred Tomb on which Christ's head lay, and broke off a morsel of the sacred rock; this he gave me as a blessed memorial, begging me at the same time not to say anything about it in Jerusalem. After again kissing the Tomb of the Lord, and greeting the keeper, I took up my lamp, filled with holy oil, and left the Holy Sepulchre full of joy, enriched by the Divine grace, and bearing in my hand a gift from the sacred place, and a token from the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord. I went on my way rejoicing as if I were the bearer of vast wealth, and returned to my cell full of great joy.

God and the Holy Sepulchre are witnesses that in these holy places I did not forget the names of the Russian princes, princesses, and their children; of the bishops, abbots, and nobles; or of my spiritual children, and all Christians; I remembered every one, and prayed first for all the princes, and then for my own sins. Thanks be to the goodness of God, who permitted me, unworthy one, to inscribe the names of the Russian princes in the Lavra of St. Sabbas, where they now pray, during the services, for them, their wives, and their children. Here are their names: Michel Sviatopolk, Vassili Vladimir, David Sviatoslavitsch, Michel Oleg Pancrace, Sviatoslavitsch, Gléb of Mensk; I have only preserved those names which I inscribed in the Holy Sepulchre, and in all the holy places, without counting all the other Russian princes and nobles. I celebrated fifty Liturgies for the Russian princes, and all the Christians, and forty Liturgies for the dead.

May the blessing of God, of the Holy Sepulchre, and of all the holy places be with those who read this narrative with faith and love; and may they obtain from God the same reward as those who have made the pilgrimage to those holy places. Happy are those who, having seen, believe! Thrice happy are those who have not seen, and yet have believed! By faith Abraham obtained the Promised Land; for, in truth, faith is equal to good works. In the name of God, my brethren and lords, do not blame my ignorance and simplicity; for the sake of the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord do not abuse this narrative. May he who reads it with love receive his reward from Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior; and may the peace of God be with you all to the end of the world. Amen.

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