



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

ARCHPASTORAL ENCYCLICAL on the GREAT FEAST of PASCHA

Protocol No. 62/2026

To the Reverend Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Holy Metropolis of Chicago:
My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

In the light of the holy Resurrection, we stand before a mystery that overturns every expectation of human reason. The tomb of Christ—sealed, silent, and dark—has become a womb full of life. Even in death, Christ is revealed as Life itself. What seemed to be defeat has become victory; what appeared to be an end has become a new beginning.

And yet, we look upon the world and still ask: if Christ is Risen, why is there so much suffering? Why do the innocent suffer, the poor remain oppressed, and the world seems marked by violence, division, and death?

These are not new questions. They echo the cry of the Psalmist: “How long, O Lord?” (Psalm 13:1). They stand at the foot of the Cross and linger at the entrance of the empty tomb. The Resurrection does not ignore these questions—but neither does it answer them in the way we might expect.

Christ enters death not with power as the world understands it, but with self-offering love. Death is swallowed up in victory (1 Corinthians 15:54) and what seemed to be the end establishes a new creation.

This does not mean that suffering has disappeared. It means that suffering does not have the final word. For this is the pattern of divine life: again and again, often hidden from our sight, life breaks forth from death—the barren bear fruit, the broken are restored, and the fallen are raised.

Therefore, to be a Christian is to be a person of hope—not a naïve hope that ignores suffering, but a Paschal hope that sees beyond it. This is the life into which we are

invited to participate: even now, we are called to see differently, to live differently, and to love differently—trusting that God is at work even where we cannot see, and that no life is lost, no suffering is meaningless, and no love is wasted.

We thus participate in and witness to the Resurrection—not only in word, but in life. Let us be a people who bring hope where there is despair, healing where there is brokenness, and love where there is division.

For Christ is Risen, and His life and His love will have the final word.

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

With paternal love in the Risen Lord,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Metropolitan Nathanael". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

†NATHANAEL

Metropolitan of Chicago