



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

Pascha 2023

To the Clergy, the Monastic Communities, and the blessed faithful of the Holy Metropolis of Chicago.

Beloved fathers and brethren, Beloved children in the Lord:

Having reached the conclusion of Great Lent and Holy Week, after weeks of intense fasting, fervent prayer, rigorous vigilance, and generous almsgiving, it is very likely that exhaustion has set in and that we are running on fumes. Under these circumstances, the message emanating from the Empty Tomb is an invitation to enter the renewal and restoration of the Resurrection of Christ:

Come receive the light from the Unwaning Light!

The summoning to receive light from the Unwaning Light is a universal message meant to reach all corners of the world. Naturally, among the first to hear the invitation are those attending the Paschal Vigil. Even with so many already having accepted the Unwaning Light, we cannot forget that there is still ample room around the Master's table for others to join (Luke 14: 15-24). It is therefore our responsibility to share the invitation widely, to freely share the details of the Feast prepared by the Lord for all to partake—*to go out into the streets and alleys of the town and to bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame* (Luke 14: 21) so that they may also be restored and comforted by the Holy Resurrection of Christ.

With great humility and love, we must extend the invitation we have received to those friends and loved ones who may find themselves estranged from Christ and His Church. It is our duty to convey the message of hope to those who continue to place Christ well after other priorities in life. As successors of the evangelical work of the Apostles, we have the great blessing of ushering back to the fold those who have rejected Christ and introducing others to Him for the first time.

My friends, as we celebrate the great Feast of Pascha and experience the joy of the Resurrection, please rest assured of my enduring love and prayers. May the Unwaning Light of the Empty Tomb revitalize your hearts and souls.

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

† NATHANAEL
Metropolitan of Chicago