



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

Encyclical on Holy and Great Pascha

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

Beloved fathers and brethren, Beloved children in the Risen Lord:

As we gather once again to celebrate the glorious feast of Holy Pascha, let us recall the profound truth that the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is not merely an event of the past but a living expression of our unity with God and with one another. Through His boundless love, God sent His only-begotten Son to die for us, offering us reconciliation and the promise of eternal life.

The Resurrection stands as the ultimate testament to this divine love, serving as a beacon of hope and unity for all humanity. In Christ's victory over death, we are not only restored to a right relationship with God but also brought into a deeper communion with one another. Just as Christ conquered death, so too does His love conquer all divisions, uniting us as one body, one family in Him.

Saint Paul beautifully expresses this truth in his letter to the Ephesians, urging us to *walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* (Ephesians 4:1-3). Thus, our unity with Christ is inseparable from our unity with one another, as we are all members of His Body—the Church.

The Holy Apostle John, in his First Universal Epistle, echoes this sentiment, declaring: *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God* (1 John 4:7). In these words, we are reminded that our love for one another is meant to reflect God's love for us, and it is through this love that we are united with both God and neighbor.

As we rejoice in the triumph of the resurrection, let us recommit ourselves to living out this unity in our daily lives. Let us love one another as Christ has loved us, bearing with one another in patience and humility. And let us proclaim to the world the transformative power of Christ's love, inviting all to share in the joy and hope that is found in Him.

May this Holy Pascha be a time of renewal and reconciliation, as we embrace our unity with Christ and with one another. Let us go forth as ambassadors of His love, shining brightly with the light of His Resurrection for all to see.

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

With paternal blessings and love in the Risen Lord,

† NATHANAEL
Metropolitan of Chicago