

Христосъ воскресѣ! Воистину воскресѣ!  
Christ Is Risen Indeed He Is Risen

*Sunday of Pascha*  
Tone *Festal Tone*

At the time of his death, Christ descended into the realm of death, the underworld where all those who had died up until that time were held captive. Seized by Death, Hades held them in chains, in bondage. No one could escape. Death and Hades could not contain Christ, the Giver of Life. In this icon we see Christ coming forth from the underworld, but he does not come out alone waving a flag of victory. No, he comes forth leading Adam and Eve, our first-created parents, out of the underworld, out of their graves. He is clothed in brilliant garments of white and gold, emerging from the blackness of death. We see the chains and locks and bolts all broken, the gates of Hades being trampled, symbols of all that had held humanity captive from the time of the fall of Adam and Eve. Also coming forth we see major figures of the Old Testament: Kings Solomon and David and then John the Baptist. They represent all those who are led free from captivity of death and the underworld and who now come into the bright light and New Life of the Resurrection. Angels above hold the Cross, no longer a symbol of shame and death, but now a sign of victory over death. Truly the icon is a visual representation of our faith, of our great paschal hymn.

**THE TRADITIONAL THREE DAYS OF  
EASTER**

In the custom and tradition of the Byzantine Catholic Church, the Resurrection Feast is observed for a three-day period with the second and third days of Easter celebrated as major holy days. Do not neglect your obligation to sanctify these festive days by participating in the Divine Liturgy and emphasizing the spiritual manner of celebrating the Easter holidays. The Church grants the bestowal of special graces and blessings to those faithful who observe the three resurrectional holy days. Make the sacrifice to attend church and thus receive these spiritual rewards! On Bright Monday, the second day of the Radiant Resurrection, the Church emphasizes the necessity of the proclamation of the resurrection event both in antiquity and in our present world. This salvific message must be proclaimed! The Emmaus procession that follows Divine Liturgy in some parishes commemorates Jesus' walk with two disciples to the village of Emmaus on the evening that He rose from the dead. These two men, Lucas and Cleopas, broadcast everywhere the news of Jesus' resurrection. We also are obliged to proclaim this same Good News! We observe the third day of the radiant Resurrection on Bright Tuesday, and the Church continues to highlight the Emmaus event on this holy day. The triumphal joy felt by Jesus' followers after His Resurrection is accentuated, for this same exhilaration must fill our hearts even today. His brilliant, radiant light emanating from the triumphant empty tomb must permeate our lives by piercing our minds with holy joy and by filling our souls with divine jubilation .

“MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLES.” - Isaiah 56: 7 If you are a visitor to St. Mary's, we want you to know how welcome you are; whether you have come from another part of the country, from across the world, or simply from another parish. We hope you find our worship true and reverent and our people here friendly and cordial. If you are seeking a spiritual home, we would be honored by your presence in our family.

## PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER VIRGIN MARY

(Pokrov)

April 17th

Isn't it odd that Cleopas and (according to Tradition) Luke didn't recognize the Risen Lord on the road to Emmaus? They had spent so much time with Him. They were even talking about Him when He joined them. Saint Luke wrote that their eyes were kept from recognizing Him (Luke 24:16). Was Jesus somehow disguised? Was His glorified body so different? Or was the problem the disciples' eyes?

Why had they left the community of the disciples in the first place? Had they just given up? Were they returning to their old way of life (like the seven disciples in John 21)? Were they trying to run away from the power and presence of God (like Peter in Luke 5:10)? Clearly, they are headed the wrong way. By their own admission, the disciples were deeply disillusioned by the events of Holy Thursday and Good Friday. They expressed their disappointment that Jesus turned out not to be the Messiah they had expected: an earthly king who would liberate Israel from the Romans (Luke 24:21). Their misguided expectations impaired their vision. They could recount the Gospel facts: how Jesus performed signs and wonders, how He died innocently, how His tomb was now empty and how the angels and the women claimed He had been raised, but they tell it as if it were all bad news! They seem unwilling to entertain the possibility that Christ is risen, even though He had prepared His disciples for this event on six occasions (Luke 9:18-22; 9:44; 12:50; 13:32-33; 17:25; 18:31-34).

Pondering why the majority of Jews failed to recognize Jesus as the Messiah even though they read the Law and the prophets Sabbath after Sabbath, Saint Paul concluded: "But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away" (2 Corinthians 3:14-16).

The two fleeing disciples refused to believe the women (one of whom was Clopas' own wife!)

and failed to understand the Scriptures. Their eyes were blinded by their own expectations, by their disappointment, perhaps even by their fear that, if true, the Resurrection would change too much in their lives.

Byzantine Catholics have a rich and joyous tradition for celebrating Easter. We greet each other, in church or on the street, by saying "Christ is risen" and responding "Indeed He is risen." We sing the Paschal troparion. A lot. We start singing it at the end of the procession around the church during Resurrection Matins.

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist John's Gospel Prologue is proclaimed at the Easter Divine Liturgy on each year. It is divided into 12 separate verses indicating that the 12 apostles' mission was to proclaim the Good News throughout the world. These verses may be chanted in several different languages so that all peoples may hear and understand the Good News. The pealing of the bells send forth this jubilant message to the entire universe that Jesus, The Messiah, established the spreading of His Church under the pastoral leadership of Peter and the Holy Apostles. Today, it is the Pope and all Bishops united with him that have this mission. Let us be grateful to Almighty God for all priests who continue this sacred mission & to all Christian faithful who live it!

Ruthenian (Rusyn) Folklore Remembered On Bright Monday and Bright Tuesday, traditional Rusyn Folklore reminds us that Jesus' followers were so overwhelmed with the joy of their Resurrected Savior that they went through the streets of Jerusalem proclaim the news of the Radiant Resurrection. Their opponents tried to squelch their enthusiasm by throwing water from their upstairs window at them. Our Byzantine Catholic ancestors of the Carpathian Mountains developed the "POLIVANKA" that is "Water-pouring" on each other. On Bright Monday, the men would pour (actually throw) water upon the women; and the later in turn did the same to the men on Bright Tuesday. As they enacted this tradition from the past they cried out, "CHRISTOS VOSKRESE!"