



Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!
Христос Вскрсе! Ваустину Вскрсе!
Sunday of the Paralytic; Burning of the Relics of St. Sava
May 10, 2009

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION – TONE THREE:

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm! He has trampled down death by death! He has become the firstborn of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy!

KONTAKION TO THE PARALYTIC - TONE THREE:

By Your divine intercession, O Lord, as You raised up the paralytic of old, so raise up my soul, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts; so that being saved I may sing to You: ‘Glory to Your power, O compassionate Christ!

PASCHAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:

Thou didst descend into the tomb, O Immortal; Thou didst destroy the power of death. In victory didst Thou arise, O Christ God, proclaiming “Rejoice” to the myrrh-bearing women, granting peace to Thy disciples, and bestowing resurrection on the fallen.

INSTEAD OF “IT IS TRULY MEET...”:

The angel cried to the Lady Full of Grace: Rejoice, O Pure Virgin! Again I say: Rejoice! Your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb! With Himself He has raised all the dead! Rejoice, all ye people! Shine! Shine! O New Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you! Exult now and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O Pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

INSTEAD OF “WE HAVE SEEN THE TRUE LIGHT...”:

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (*once*)

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

The Prokeimenon— Psalm 33: 22 in the First Tone:

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

Acts 9: 32-42

In those days it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bed-ridden eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed.” Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

The Alleluia Verses – Psalm 89: 1, 2

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever, and My truth will be prepared in the heavens.

Epistle Commentary

Saints, in the terminology of the early Church, refers to all Christians sanctified by the Holy Spirit and who participate in the holiness of God. Jesus healed the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda and then **Peter** healed one in Lydda; Jesus raised Jairus’ daughter from the dead and then Peter raised **Tabitha**: as there was power with Christ to heal during His earthly ministry, so there is power with His Church to continue this ministry.



GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

John 5: 1-15

At that time there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Gospel Commentary

This healing is the third of seven signs recorded in John's Gospel and exemplifies Jesus' divine power to give life. St. John Chrysostom and other Church Fathers state that this **feast of the Jews** is Pentecost, due to the references to the Law of Moses later in the chapter. It was a common belief that illness and misfortune were divine retribution for sin. Christ, however, does not totally ratify this as an absolute principle. The paralytic's cure is to lead to conversion and a righteous life.



SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

Reflection from *The Prologue* for April 27 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic

The true Faith must be persecuted in this world. The Savior Himself said this clearly and openly to His apostles. St. Apollinarius of Hierapolis, in writing against the Montanist heretics, says: “Let them tell us before God: who, out of all their prophets, beginning with Montanus and his wives, was persecuted by the Jews and killed by the ungodly? No one. Who from among them was taken away for the name of Christ and was crucified on the cross? Again, no one. Have any of the women ever been flogged or stoned in the Jewish synagogues? Never and nowhere.” The Orthodox saint is saying that the true Faith, on the other hand, must be persecuted in this world. Heresies are generally closer to the worldly and demonic spirit, and thus the world and the demons do not persecute their own. To be constantly persecuted—with brief intervals in between—is a characteristic of the Faith and the Orthodox Church. This persecution has existed, either from without or within—externally from unbelievers and internally from heretics—throughout all of history.

The Burning of the Relics of Saint Sava, Archbishop of Serbia

The body of St. Sava was buried in Mileševo Monastery. During the time of the Turkish tyranny, the Serbian people gathered around the relics of their saint to seek comfort and healing. Fearing that an insurrection against the Turks might arise from that place, Sinan Pasha of Belgrade ordered that the relics of St. Sava be brought to Belgrade and he burned them there on Vracar hill, on April 27, 1594. But with the burning of the relics of this saint, the demon-ridden Pasha did not burn the saint, who remains alive before the throne of God in the heavens and in the hearts of his people on earth.

St. Theophan the Recluse from, *The Art of Prayer*

The root of good inner order is the fear of God. Preserve this fear within you constantly: it will hold everything taut, and will allow no slackness either in physical members or thoughts, creating a vigilant heart and a sober mind, and allowing no bodily torpor or blurring of thought. But one must always remember that success in any aspect of the spiritual life is the fruit of the grace of God. Spiritual life comes entirely from His most Holy Spirit. We have our own spirit but it is void of power. It begins to gain strength only when the grace of God flows into it.

Our whole object is to acquire the habit of keeping our attention always on the Lord, who is omnipresent and sees everything, who desires the salvation of all of us and is ready to help us towards it. This habit will not allow you to grieve, whether your sorrow be within or without; for it fills the soul with a sense of perfect contentment, which leaves no room for any feeling of scarcity or need. It makes us entrust ourselves and all we have into the Lord’s hands, and so gives birth to a sense of His permanent protection and help.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pray for the Holy Hierarchical Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Church

His Grace, Bishop Maxim, is with the assembly of bishops meeting in Belgrade and asks the clergy and faithful of our diocese to pray that the gathered hierarchs “may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1: 10).

Be a part of the *Western American Diocese 2009 Annual*

Detailed information is forthcoming on how to submit an ad or greeting for inclusion in the beautiful, full-color publication from our own Sebastian Press that will be available during the Diocesan Days weekend, September 4-6, 2009, at the St. Sava Mission in Jackson, CA.