

ENCYCLICAL
for the All-Glorious Resurrection of Christ Our Savior

**The Mind of the Risen Christ,
Purification of the Heart, and the Vision of God**

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Let us keep feast yet again with the whole of creation, which, renewed, endows its fragrance upon all that surrounds us.

Let this Feast be unceasing and perpetual, for our Lord Jesus Christ is risen, and death and Hades have not only been vanquished and trampled, but have also ceased any longer to tyrannize and dominate man, the Image and Creation of God.

“Today spring giveth forth fragrance and the new creation danceth....” “Today all creation exulteth and rejoiceth, for Christ is risen and Hades is depoiled....” “Today, the Master hath harrowed Hades, lifting up those whom it held captive in grievous bondage from ages past....” “Let the things of Heaven make glad and let the things of the earth rejoice...”!

On this radiant and all-gladsome day, we sense that our being is permeated by the all-joyful tidings of the Holy Apostle Paul:

Brethren, “God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ...and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”¹

Since God is rich in compassion, “He stooped down to earth and retrieved His Image.”² He vivified it, resurrected it, and exalted it; He made it sit upon the Throne of the Lamb that was slain.

Glory to Thy compassion, O Lord! Glory to Thine Œconomy, O Thou Who alone lovest mankind! Glory to Thee, O God, O Holy Trinity, glory to Thee!

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Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The words “A great thing is man,” resound from the depths of the ages from the wise author of the Old Testament Book of Proverbs.³

A great thing is this creature of God which is called man. The most beautiful creature, the apogee of creation, the Image of God. It is precisely because of this greatness that it behooves man—now revived, liberated, and renewed—to recover his ancient glory, his primordial beauty amid the glory of the Holy Trinity, and to behold God.

The Resurrection of our Lord inaugurates the era in which the vision of God becomes possible. This charism of beholding God will assuredly be given to us in its fullness at the End of the

Age, in the newness of creation, when “we shall see Him as He is.”⁴ Then the servants of God “shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.”⁵

Yet our Incarnate, Crucified, and Risen Lord and God regards as fortunate—and these, indeed, are the truly fortunate ones—those men and women who have purity and chastity of soul in this life, for they shall see God: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”⁶

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Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The vision of God requires, as we all know, a change of outlook: from self-interest and concern for ourselves to adopting and embracing the Mind of the Risen Christ; that is, the mindset of magnanimity and selflessness, the mindset of humility and obedience to the point of sacrifice.

Brothers and sisters, the Holy Apostle Paul exhorts us: “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”⁷

God became man in order to instil His Mind in us. This Mind will lead us to love and compassion and will give us purity of heart. And then we will be granted the great charism of the vision of God.

“Purity of heart,” says St. Isaac the Syrian, “is love for the weak who fall.” And he continues: “If you see your brother sinning, throw the garment of your love over his shoulders.”⁸

A love of such radiance flows only from the Mind of the Risen Christ. This love is truly purifying, creative, and efficacious, since “it alters the nature of things,”⁹ as the Divine Chrysostomos assures us, and leads us unerringly to the vision of God within the Light of the Resurrection and the glory of the Holy Trinity.

“A great thing is man,” therefore, but a merciful man is greatly valued: “And precious is a merciful man.”¹⁰

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My brothers and sisters, may the inestimable prayers of our much-revered Elder, Metropolitan Cyprian, and the intercessions of the *Theotokos*, with the Grace of the Resurrection of our Savior Christ, strengthen us in the struggle for a change in mind, in order that we might become truly compassionate, so that our hearts might be purified and we might be vouchsafed the vision of God, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen!

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!
† The Holy Resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, 2013

Your humble supplicant before our Risen Lord,
† Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi
Acting President of the Holy Synod in Resistance

Notes

1. Ephesians 2:4-6.
2. St. Nicholas Cabasilas, *Concerning the Life in Christ*, Discourse I, §18, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CL, col. 504B.
3. Proverbs 20:6.
4. I St. John 3:2.
5. Revelation 22:4.
6. St. Matthew 5:8.
7. Philippians 2:4-5.
8. Cf. St. Isaac the Syrian, “Discourse LVIII,” in *Ἄπαντα τὰ εὐρεθέντα Ἀσκητικά* [The complete extant ascetical discourses] (Thessalonike: Ekdoseis Bas. Regopoulou, 1997), p. 239.
9. St. John Chrysostomos, “Homily XXXII on I Corinthians,” §6, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXI, col. 273.
10. Proverbs 20:6.

N.B.: The Reverend Parish Priests are asked to read the present Encyclical immediately after the Holy Gospel at the Divine Liturgy of Pascha.