



Simply Orthodox



Easter Message*

***Sermon prepared by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh
9th April 1972***

Sayings from the Fathers:

However, it is through death and the resurrection that God in His foresight has given us the Kingdom, incorruptibility, the totality of life eternal. Given these conditions, we unquestionably become partakers of the good things to come, that is, incorruptible, immortal, sons of God, sons of the light and of the day, inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven, since we carry the Kingdom within.

St. Symeon the New Theologian

www.balamandmonastery.org.lb

Church Schedule

***Vesper Service
Saturday 7pm***

***Divine Liturgy
Sunday 10am***

***Church Address:
6 Oxford Street
Collingwood VIC
(Melway 44 B6)***

Christ is risen!

When Christ first rose from the tomb and appeared to His disciples and the myrrh-bearing women, He greeted them with the word "Rejoice!". And then later when He appeared to the Apostles His first words were "Peace be unto you!"; peace, because their confusion was very great - the Lord had died. It seemed as though all hope had perished for the victory of God over human wickedness, for the victory of good over evil. It would seem that life itself had been slain and light had faded. All that remained for the disciples who had believed in Christ, in life, in love, was to go on existing, for they could no longer live. Having tasted eternal life they were now condemned to expect cruel persecution and death at the hands of Christ's enemies. "Peace be unto you", proclaimed Christ. "I have arisen, I am alive, I am with you, and henceforth nothing - neither death nor persecution - will ever separate us or deprive you of eternal life, the victory of God". And then, having convinced them of His physical resurrection, having restored their peace and an unshakable certainty of faith, Christ uttered words which may in the present age sound menacing and frightening to many, "As the Father sent Me, so I send you". Only a few hours after Christ's death on the cross, not long after the fearful night in Gethsemane, the betrayal by Judas when Christ had been taken by His enemies, condemned to death, led out beyond the city walls and died on the cross, these words sounded menacing. And it was only faith, the conquering certainty that Christ had risen, that God had conquered, that the Church had become an invincible force that transformed these words into words of hope and triumphant God-speed.

And the disciples went out to preach; nothing could stop them. Twelve men confronted the Roman empire. Twelve defenceless men, twelve men without legal rights were out to preach the simplest message, that divine love had entered the

world and that they were willing to give their lives for the sake of this love, in order that others might believe and come to life, and that a new life might begin for others through their death. [I Cor. IV :9-13]

Death was indeed granted them; there is not a single apostle except St. John the Divine who did not die a martyr's death. Death was granted them, and persecution and suffering and a cross (II Cor. VI: 3-14).

But faith, faith in Christ, in God Incarnate, faith in Christ crucified and risen, faith in Christ who brought unquenchable love into the world, has triumphed. "Our faith which has conquered the world is the victory."

This preaching changed the attitude of man to man; every person became precious in the eyes of another. The destiny of the world was widened and deepened; it burst the bounds of earth and united earth to heaven. And now we Christians, in the words of a western preacher, in the person of Jesus Christ, have become the people to whom God has committed the care of other people; that they should believe in themselves because God believes in us; that they should hope for all things because God puts His hope in us; that they should be able to carry our victorious faith through the furnace of horror, trials, hatred and persecution - that faith which has already conquered the world, in the faith in Christ, God crucified and risen.

So let us also stand up for this faith. Let us proclaim it fearlessly, let us teach it to our children, let us bring them to the sacraments of the Church which, even before they can understand it, unite them with God and plant eternal life in them.

All of us, sooner or later, will stand before the judgment of God and will have to answer whether we were able to love the whole world - believers and unbelievers, the good and the bad - with the sacrificial, crucified, all-conquering love with which God loves us. May the Lord give us invincible courage, triumphant faith, joyful love in order that the kingdom for which God became man should be established, that we should truly become godly, that our earth should indeed become heaven where love, triumphant love lives and reigns. Christ is risen!

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www.metropolit-anthony.org.ru/eng/eng_64.htm

The Scripture Readings and Commemorations

Sunday, April 19th, 2009

The Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ



EPISTLE READING

The Reading is from Acts 1:1-8

¹ The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ² until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³ to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. ⁴ And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; ⁵ for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ⁶ Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from John 1:1-17

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. ⁸ He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. ⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'" ¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

New King James Version sourced from www.biblegateway.com

The Lives of Saints Commemorated:

Sunday 19th April, 2009

St John of the Ancient Caves in Palestine (8th c.)

Filled in his youth with the love of Christ and a hunger for holiness, he travelled among the holy places of the Middle East seeking the counsel of holy men. Finally he settled as a monk in the Ancient Caves of the Lavra of Chariton the Great in Palestine. Living in Chariton's own cave, he spent his days in fasting, prayer and vigil, becoming known in his own lifetime for his holiness. He reposed in peace in the 8th century.

Our Holy Father Agathangelos (1819)

"From Thrace, his worldly name being Anastasios, he was a slave to some Turks, and they compelled him to embrace Islam in Smyrna. As a penitent, he was tonsured at the monastery of Esphigmenou on the Holy Mountain. Tormented by his conscience, he desired to wash his sins in his own blood, so he went to Smyrna, where he showed a Cross and an icon of Christ's Resurrection to the Turks. He was beheaded on April 19th, 1819, at the age of nineteen. He appeared to his spiritual father, Germanos, after his death." (Prologue)

Assembled by John Brady www.abbamoses.com/months/april.html

Fr Igor will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at **St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Ballarat**

fourth Saturday of the month
commencing 10am.

Contact Spiro 53347439 or spiro@iprimus.com.au

Church Address:

116 Humffray St, BALLARAT



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