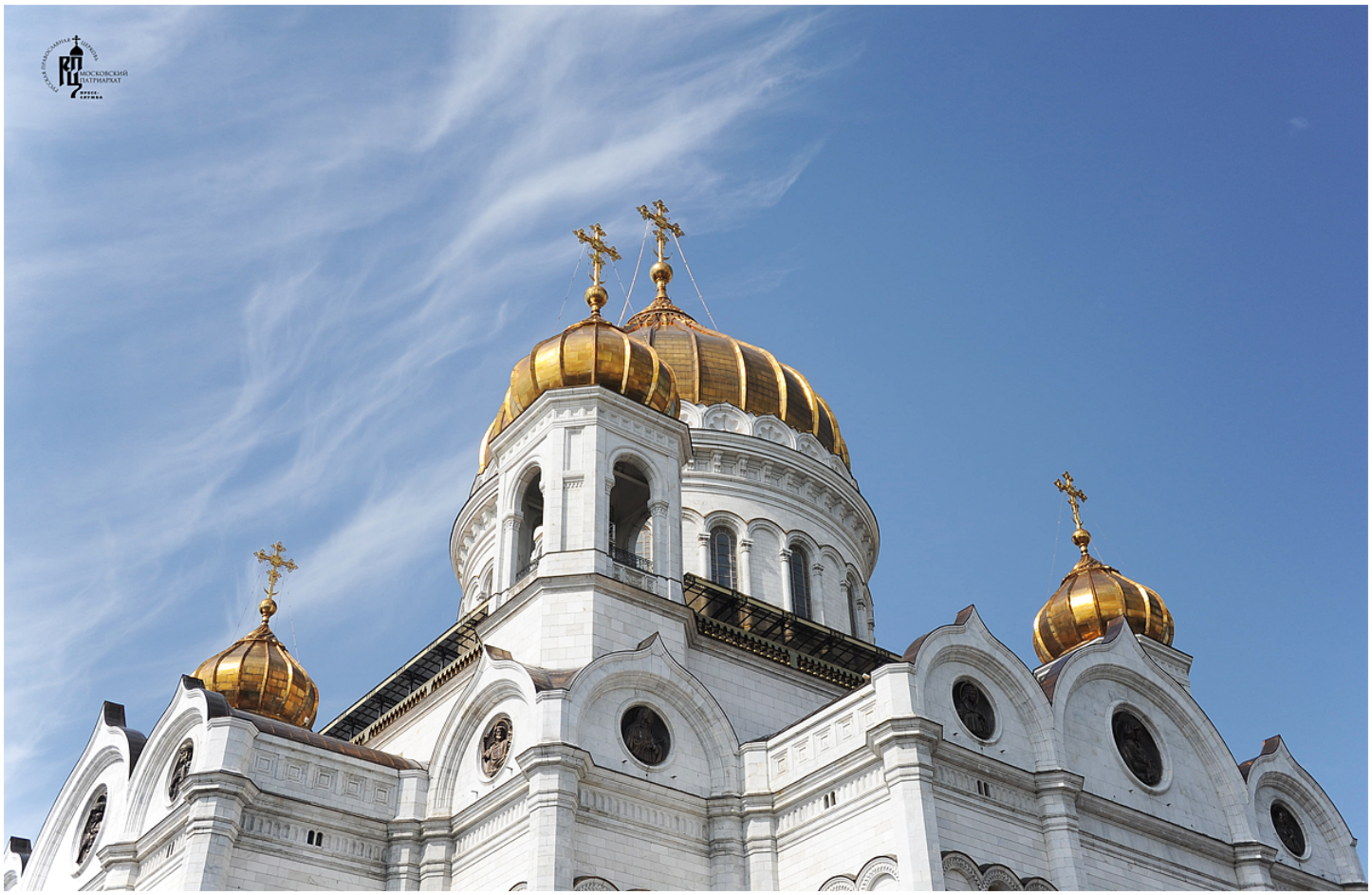
THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Paschal Message by Patriarch KIRILL of Moscow and All Russia



Paschal Message

by Patriarch KIRILL of Moscow and All Russia

to the archpastors, pastors, deacons, monastics

and all the faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church

Beloved in the Lord Most Reverend archpastors, all-honourable presbyters and deacons, God-loving monks and nuns, dear brothers and sisters:

CHRIST IS RISEN!

It is with these life-affirming words filled with great spiritual power that from the depths of my heart I greet and congratulate you all on the great and radiant feast of Holy Pascha.

It is not fortuitous that church tradition calls this day the “feast of feasts” and the “triumph of triumphs”, for Christ’s Resurrection is the solid foundation of our faith and hope. At the heart of it we find the transformation and renewal of every human being, the light of life everlasting and the fount of constant joy. Christ’s Resurrection has vanquished the most terrible enemies of the human race, which are sin and death, it has torn down the barrier between God and people and delivered us from the power of evil.

Glorifying the Resurrection of the Saviour, a Serbian saint, Bishop Nikolaj (Velimirović) of Ohrid and Žiča, wrote: “Christ’s victory is the sole victory in which all human beings can rejoice, from the first-created to the last. All other victories on earth have divided and continue to divide people… Yet only Christ’s victory can be likened to the sun pouring forth its bright rays upon all those who stand beneath it” (*Conversations. The Gospel on the Vanquisher of Death*).

This means that every human being who strives for salvation, every believer and follower of Christ, has been granted the opportunity to obtain victory over sin and become, as the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John says, one of the beloved “children of God” (1 John 3.1).

We celebrate Pascha not as a passage from one land to another, even a Promised Land, as the ancient

Hebrews celebrated the Old Testament Passover, rejoicing in their liberation from the long years of Egyptian captivity. Our Pascha has a different meaning, for the Lord has delivered us from the "darkness of sin and the shadow of death" (Luke 1.79) and granted to us the kingdom of heaven.

"Out into the light of freedom did Christ lead the despondent captives; to the heavenly heights of Paradise led them He, rejoicing" (*Hymn XXXVIII*). These inspired words of Saint Ephrem the Syrian express our profound experience of the Paschal mystery, which is the mystery of salvation of the human person from the influence of evil. Evil has not disappeared, yet we have found a way, by the power of God's grace, of combating and vanquishing it through repentance, prayer and through partaking of the Body and Blood of the Saviour in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. For this reason, we may affirm, along with the Apostle Paul, that "he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in us" (Romans 8.11).

Christ's Pascha heralds the passing over from earthly corruption to life eternal with God, to union with our Maker and Redeemer. Thus, as we rejoice in Jesus, who has risen for us, and with thanksgiving "lift up the cup of salvation" (Psalm 116.13) through which the Church gives us the true food and drink of immortality which is the Body and Blood of Christ, we shall tirelessly and without ceasing glorify the Lord with deeds of love and kindness, thereby showing ourselves to be his true disciples.

And although our striving for good and growth in God's cause may at times seem to be the modest "widow's mite" (Mark 12.42), let us always try to ensure that our strong faith and hope does not weaken, "because we know that in the Lord our labour is not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15.58).

Let us, then, render praise and glory to the Risen Saviour, let us embrace each other with love and let us share the unfading Paschal joy with every person whom God brings to us on our path through life, testifying in word and deed that

CHRIST HAS RISEN INDEED!

+KIRILL

PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA

Pascha

2025

Patriarchal message is also available in other languages:

Azerbaijanian

Armenian

Byelorussian

Estonian

French

German

Greek

Kazakh

Kyrgyz

Latvian

Lithuanian

Romanian

Russian

Serbian

Simplified Chinese

Tajik

Traditional Chinese

Turkman

Ukrainian

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