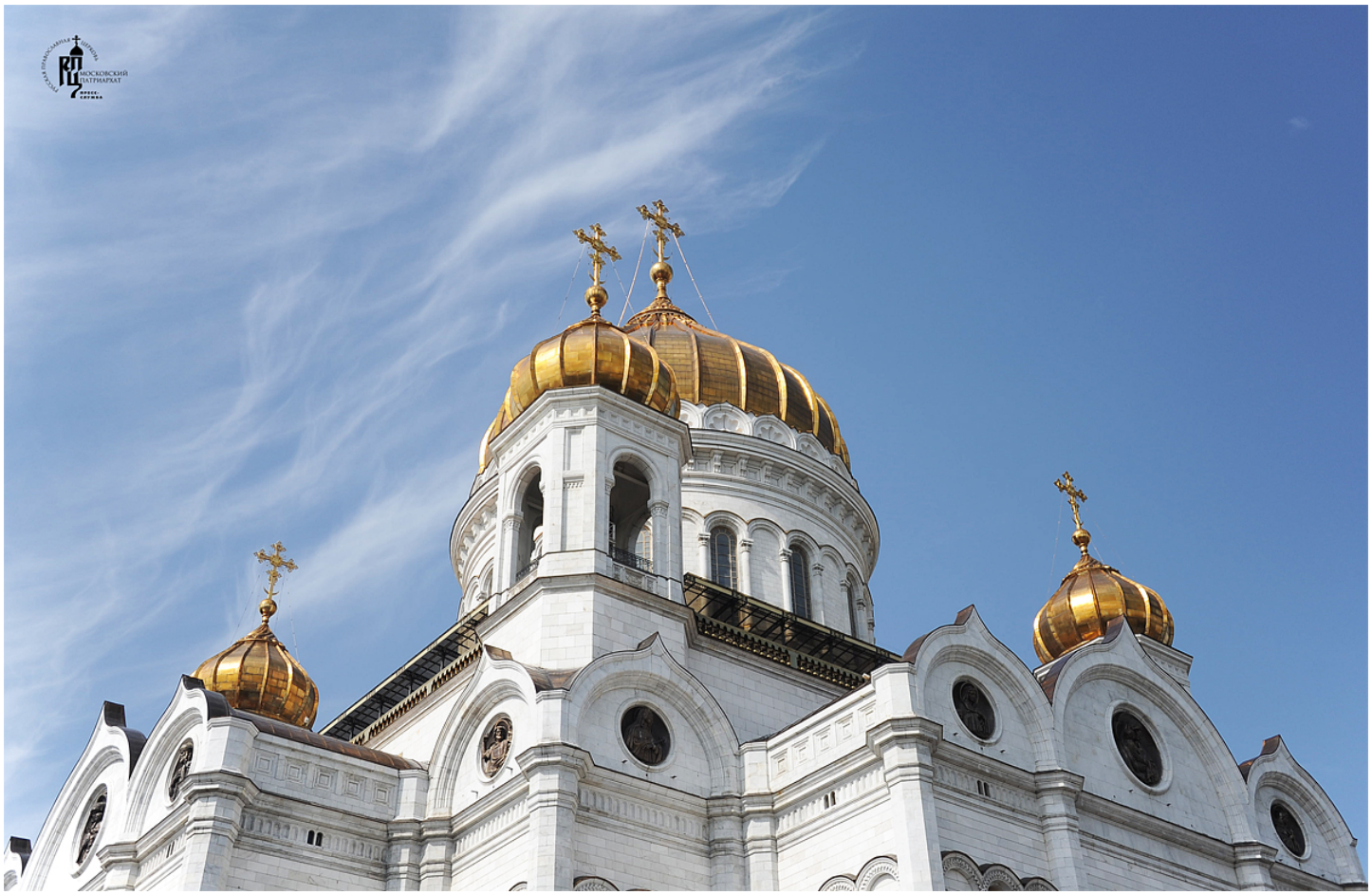
THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Paschal Message by Patriarch KIRILL of Moscow and All Russia



Paschal Message

by His Holiness KIRILL, Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus',

to the Archpastors, Pastors, Deacons, Monks, Nuns

and All the Faithful Children of the Russian Orthodox Church

Beloved in the Lord Your Graces the archpastors, all-honourable presbyters and deacons, God-loving monks and nuns, dear brothers and sisters,

CHRIST IS RISEN!

In all its richness and diversity the human language knows no words more joyful and desired for the believing heart than this overwhelming testimony to the victory of life over death and good over evil.

"Christ is risen!" This good news encapsulates the cherished power of hope and the great expectation rooted in faith by which people have lived since the expulsion from Paradise. They have lived awaiting forgiveness, reconciliation and liberation. Yet the Lord has granted to us incomparably more, for in His love He has *provided something better* (Heb. 11.40).

The Son of God came into the world and became man, He shared with us all the burdens of our earthly existence and drank to the bottom the cup of suffering, the most bitter of which was the cup of death. *A man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity* (Is. 53.3), He took upon Himself our sins by voluntarily ascending the Cross.

Yet could death contain the Creator of life? Could the insatiable depths of Hades consume the One through Whose Word *all things came into being* (Jn. 1.3)? *His glory shines upon the world and enlightens the very depths of the abyss; death is annihilated, night has vanished, and the gates of Sheol are broken; creatures lying in darkness from ancient times are clothed in light*, Saint Ephraim the Syrian writes in his *Hymn to the Light*, inspiringly praising the Saviour's victory over death.

Do we know of instances when death ever returned that which it gained? And if it ever returned it, then only until it would take it back again. But *Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him* (Rom. 6.9)! He, *being the first fruits of all those who have died* (1 Cor. 15.20), goes before us on this path, for *Christ is the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ* (1 Cor. 15.23).

God, Who through His divine incarnation renewed human nature and healed it from the wounds of sin, through His Resurrection leads us to better pastures. He not only returns to people that which they have lost, granting them forgiveness and reconciliation with Him; He also *destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ* (Eph. 1.5) and *to all who received him, who believed in him, he gave power to become children of God* (Jn. 1.12) and gods by grace.

Along with the spring transformation of nature coming to life, the amazing news of salvation again and again hurtles to every corner of the earth: *You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here* (Mk. 16.6). The tomb is empty, for *he has been raised, as he said* (Matt. 28.6)!

Christ's Passover is the inexhaustible fount of our great joy, a joy which flows from the love of God for humankind, transcending all understanding. Through it, all good things, visible and invisible, have been revealed to us. The boundless power of this sacrificial love extends so far that it vanquishes Hades, opens the gates of Paradise and grants forgiveness and genuine spiritual freedom.

Love is strong as death (Song, 8.6), says the wizened king Solomon. Yet we who are Christ's disciples testify with conviction that love is even stronger than death. It overcomes time and space, casts down sin and the power of darkness. The All-Merciful Lord calls us to the kingdom of love, yet enter it we can with only love in our hearts. Let us, then, forgive and embrace one another; let us show charity to those in need and extend consolation to the afflicted.

Being sanctified by Christ and partaking in the wondrous triumph of Pascha, we transform the world around us through the incorruptible light of the Resurrection, we bring it into the joy of salvation which the whole cosmos awaits, striving for the *freedom of the glory of the children of God* (Rom. 8.21). It is then that our lives, lived in oneness with the Lord, become a true Liturgy, a Liturgy of truly cosmic proportions in which every created being can render thanksgiving and praise to the Maker in proclaiming: *Glory to Thy resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy kingdom! Glory to Thy economy, Thou who alone art the Lover of mankind!* (Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 1).

In the world there are many spiritual searches, but there is only one *Way, the Truth, and the Life* (Jn. 14.6). There is only one Victor over sin and death. There is only One Who opens up the heavens, and His name is Jesus Christ, as *there is salvation in no one else* (Acts 4.11).

From the depths of my heart I congratulate you all on the Feast of Pascha, and again and again I address you with the life-affirming and ages-old uplifting testimony that

THE LORD HAS TRULY RISEN!

+KIRILL

PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUS’

Easter

2026

Patriarchal message is also available in other languages:

French

Georgian

German

Greek

Italian

Romanian

Russian

Serbian

Simplified Chinese

Traditional Chinese

Ukrainian

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/94167/