



МОНРЕАЛЬСКАЯ И КАНАДСКАЯ ЕПАРХИЯ
РУССКОЙ ПРАВОСЛАВНОЙ ЦЕРКВИ ЗАГРАНИЦЕЙ

DIOCÈSE DE MONTRÉAL ET DU CANADA • L'ÉGLISE RUSSE ORTHODOXE HORS FRONTIÈRES
DIOCESE OF MONTREAL AND CANADA • RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

ЕПАРХИАЛЬНАЯ КАНЦЕЛЯРИЯ
DIOCESAN CHANCELLERY

EASTER EPISTLE

To the clergy and God-saved flock of the Diocese of Canada
Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ!

CHRIST IS RISEN!

With all my heart I greet you with the Feast of Feasts, and pray for each of you to be granted glorious Paschal joy, peace and wellbeing.

These sacred words – *Christ is Risen!* – possess most amazing power: we say them every year, yet each time their sound is new in our ears. The force of these words restores, comforts and renews our souls. That is why our hearts are full of expectation for the Lord's Pascha, when the triumphant *Christ is Risen!* is proclaimed throughout the world.

It feels as if we are running towards the Resurrection of Christ – and its light shines for us through the darkness of Golgotha, through the days of the Holy Week.

This great and holy day of Easter once again opens for us the gates of Paradise, and makes us taste, even in a small way, of the fullness of the joy in heavens, where the ranks of angels never cease to glorify the Risen Christ. This day fills many hearts with desire to touch, even for a brief moment, the hem of the garment of our Risen Lord, to receive the power coming through it.

Our ever-memorable second Primate Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky) many years ago said: "The people in whose lives the Church is absent, even they make haste to come to the Church of God on this Sacred Night, to lighten their flickering, about to go out lamps from the bright ray of the common faith".

When on the night of Christ's Resurrection we enter the resplendently lit church, the Easter joy of the new life, joy that cannot be put into words, enters our hearts at once. This joy is heard in the singing of the choir, it radiates from the church lights, is present in this most marvellous harmony of light, sound and color which the Orthodox Easter service, full of exalted sacred poetry, is. This incomparable, heavenly beauty of the Feast of Pascha has long ago blessedly wounded the Orthodox Russian soul, and it could never forget it.

The Resurrection of Christ opens for us the source of life everlasting, and so we all with joyous impatience wait for the coming of the Feast of Feasts. From the day of the Resurrection those who believe in Christ expect, according to God's promise, "a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13).

Christ is Risen indeed!

GABRIEL

Archbishop of Montreal and Canada