April 2022

My dear Metropolis of Atlanta Family,

“Let all partake of the feast of faith. Let all receive the riches of goodness. Let no one lament his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed. Let no one mourn his transgressions, for pardon has dawned from the grave. Let no one fear death, for the Savior’s death has set us free.” (From St. John Chrysostom’s Paschal Homily)

I greet you with love and joy in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! As we approach our Lord’s life-giving Resurrection, I pray that you and your family are blessed with the radiant joy that comes to us through the Feast of Feasts. This year’s celebration arrives as parishioners who have been absent during the COVID-19 pandemic return to our communities, and for this I am so happy.

Having recently experienced a period of ill-health, nothing has given me such happiness and strength as seeing so many faithful faces when I serve during Divine Liturgy, or when I visited our GOYAns during our recent Metropolis Lenten Retreat. Truly, my recovery has given me a special appreciation for the emotions we experience during this holy season: as we all move from the deep sadness of our Lord’s Passion to the joyous hope of His Resurrection.

Of course, to celebrate the Lord’s victory over death, during a time when Russia, a traditionally Orthodox country, continues to cause terrible, unjustified destruction to its Orthodox neighbor, Ukraine, is a very serious reminder that our world is still broken. Christ’s Death and Resurrection have opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all—but we must freely choose to take this gift. Therefore, as we—Greek, Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox—prepare to exclaim, ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΘ! Christ is Risen! may we pray that the hearts of the Russian leaders be softened as we venerate the Empty Tomb of our Lord. Only when we live in peace and justice, will we as Orthodox Christians be considered worthy to exclaim the words of St. John Chrysostom’s Homily.

Praying that the light and gladness of our Lord’s Resurrection dwell within your hearts all the days of your lives, I remain,

Yours with paternal blessings and love in the Name of our Lord,

+ ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta