My Beloved Ones,

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΘΗ!
Christ is Risen!

As we continue through this Paschal season, our Church has dedicated this Sunday to the Myrrh Bearers, who “…went to the tomb when the sun had risen…” (Mark 16:2) Though the tomb was under heavy guard, they were willing to make the dangerous journey to honor the One they loved.

Let us think back to Christ’s Betrayal, and how the Evangelist Mark tells us, “All of them deserted him and fled. A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked” (Mark 14:50-52). This moment may seem strange, especially because the young man is not named. However, by not naming him, St. Mark is using him as a symbol of the shame experienced by the Disciples, who despite their promises to die with Christ were too weak to stay with Him. However, you may ask yourself, why in this season of joy, do I speak of Christ’s Betrayal? Because the shame of this young man is corrected in the Resurrection.

As the Myrrh Bearing Women “…entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, ‘Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you” (Mark 16:5-7). In one moment, a young man abandons his Lord, discarding his own clothes to save himself; and yet, now a young man is seen in white—the color of light, hope, and purity—to announce the Good News. Perhaps in leaving both young men unnamed, St. Mark allows the reader to imagine themselves. Whether these two men are different, or they are the same person, the message is clear: Christ’s Resurrection frees us from shame & all sin, since it gives us a chance to start our lives again, knowing that we can be reunited with Him in His Heavenly Kingdom.

In reflecting on these Holy Myrrh Bearers, we can see that St. Mark’s Gospel speaks of the whole of humanity: from those who fled, to those who remained faithful. In a similar way, when St. Mark tells us that the women “…went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid” he allows us to stand in front of the empty Tomb and ask ourselves important questions (Mark 16:8). Do we truly believe? Will we go to our homes and be silently amazed, or will we loudly proclaim that Christ is Risen, and that salvation has been given to the whole world?

+ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta