



*ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA*  
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Archpastoral Letter  
Holy Pascha 2012  
No. 101

Dearly Beloved Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest!

Christ Is Risen!

When the Lord approached the tomb of Lazarus and met his sister, Martha, our Lord said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26) This question posed to Martha is a question directed to us as well. Do we believe the words of Christ? Do we believe that He has the divine authority to raise the dead on the last day, as well as here in this world? Do we believe He is the resurrection and the life?

Martha believed in the resurrection on the last day, but did not have the complete faith in Jesus that He could act as He wills and bring Lazarus back to life. She only despaired that if Jesus had only come sooner, Lazarus would not have died. The death of Lazarus was used for the glory of God!

Christ showed that He possesses full divine authority over death by calling Lazarus out of the tomb. The joy that we share on this Day of the Resurrection is the assurance that Christ has conquered sin and death, and we no longer need to be in fear.

There are those today who still doubt the miracle of the Resurrection of Christ. St. Paul states, "Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty." (1 Corinthians 15:12-14) St. Paul, of all the Apostles, believed in the Resurrection of our Lord. The Lord appeared in His Resurrected Body to the unbelieving Paul, then Saul, as he traveled the road to Damascus to persecute the followers of Christ. No one could say that Paul was filled with emotion and believed in the Resurrection because he was one of His Apostles during the three years

of our Lord's ministry. Paul believed because he beheld the Resurrected Lord. Seeing, he believed.

"...Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29)

During Holy Week, we have walked with Christ and beheld His Passion, and now rejoice in the Resurrected Lord and joyously proclaim – Christ Is Risen! We are among those who have not seen, but believe. We may not have physically seen the resurrection of Christ, but we can behold the power of the resurrection in our own lives.

May the Resurrected Lord continue to bless the lives of all of the faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest. May our Lord bless you with the joy of His presence during these glorious days! CHRIST IS RISEN!

Your shepherd in the Resurrected Lord,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthias". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the printed name below it.

Matthias  
Bishop of Chicago and the Midwest