



at a time, most of whom were still alive when St. Paul was writing (I. Corinthians 15:6). The reassuring words of this Epistle continue to provide us today with their intended effect, which is that our faith in Christ is not futile at all and that, because of the reality of His Resurrection, we are no longer held captive to our sins.

The second verse of the Paschal hymn explains to us the extraordinary manner by which Christ conquered death's dominion over us once and for all: "Trampling death by death." When Jesus was crucified, He took on the sins of all humanity and suffered the intensity of which remains truly incomprehensible to us as human beings. This demonstrates the unending love of our God, Who took on human flesh and Who died on a Cross for our salvation. By submitting Himself to death, Christ not only annihilated sin but also death. The final defeat of the archenemy death could not happen but only through death itself, not an ordinary death however, but the death of God who became man.

The third and final verse reveals the very essence of the Feast, for it encapsulates the full consequence of Christ's Resurrection from the dead: "And to those in the tombs bestowing life." To all of us on this day then, this is a day of promise and of hope for everlasting life with Him. This last verse reiterates the message that St. Paul was communicating to the Romans when he wrote that as Christians we are dead to sin, but alive in Christ: "We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God, we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). This is the message of our Orthodox Christian faith which we celebrate on this day of Pascha and indeed every day of our lives here on Earth. It is a message that proclaims our ultimate victory over all forces of darkness that attempt to impede our progress on the road to salvation and eternal life with Jesus Christ.

It is in this spirit that our repeated singing of this beautiful triumphant hymn for 40 days will enable us to come closer and closer toward understanding the power of its message:

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

May the Clergy and Laity, Friends and Supporters of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese experience the love, joy, and excitement of the early followers of Christ when they first saw Him after His Resurrection. Christ is Risen!

Working in the Risen Lord's Vineyard with much love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Metropolitan Gregory". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**+Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa**

*To be read as the sermon in all churches of the Diocese at the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ!*

*The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America*

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE