



МОНРЕАЛЬСКАЯ И КАНАДСКАЯ ЕПАРХІЯ  
РУССКОЙ ПРАВОСЛАВНОЙ ЦЕРКВИ ЗАГРЯНИЦЕЙ

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 all Feasts – the Glorious Resurrection of Christ, and wish each of you Paschal joy, peace and wellbeing.

All of us know that the most joyous, the most solemn among all the feasts that our Lord has given to His Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is the Feast of the Pascha of the Lord, the Glorious Resurrection of Christ. Holy Hierarch Innocent of Kherson says that on that day the marks of the glory of the Lord are imprinted clearly upon our hearts – and we surely feel it.

Let us give ear, beloved brothers and sisters, to the words of the Paschal Service: “Now all things are filled with light, heaven and earth and all that is under the earth! So let all creation celebrate the rising of Christ, wherein we are established”. The light of the Resurrection reaches the depth of hell, as we can see in the holy icons of our Risen Lord Jesus. The Orthodox Russian people’s lore holds that, from the very first day of the Holy Resurrection of Christ, the gates of Paradise are opened, and remain open until the Leave-taking of Easter; in our churches this corresponds to the Royal Doors staying open during the Bright Week, revealing the Sanctuary. In Old Russia a touching tale was told that even the torments of hell are lightened during these days; as though the sinners in the nethermost parts were granted rest from Holy Thursday until the very day of Pentecost.

Apostle Paul wrote to the first Christians: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ: tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Rom. 8:35). Need I say that our earthly life is not at all simple and sweet, especially in these days, when we are reminded, hourly and daily, of the words that our Lord addressed to the Apostles: “And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against

kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." (Mt. 24:6-8). The "spirits of evil under the heavens" through the people whom they enslaved are seeking to do all they can to poison us with the venom of division. Unfriendly powers have been labouring steadfastly, and are labouring now to sow discord between us, who are brothers in faith and in spirit, the inheritors of the common history and culture.

The Lord has granted our beloved Father Seraphim of Sarov the ever-present Easter joy, so that, no matter what day it was, he would greet those who came to him with the words: "My joy, Christ is Risen!" As for us, beloved brothers and sisters, let us step back from our sorrows and worries, if only for these days of the Pascha of Christ, and pray that the Easter joy will touch all people in the lands of our historic Motherland, so that, in fulfillment of His foremost commandment of love for one another, our Risen Lord would grant them a speedy peace.

So let us say again those wonderful words of the Psalmist, which are proclaimed many times in the Church of Christ: "This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118:24).

**Christ is Risen Indeed!**

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

GABRIEL  
Archbishop of Montreal and Canada

CHRIST'S PASCHA, 2022.