



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΙΑΣ
ARCHDIOCESE OF THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN

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Encyclical of His Eminence the Archbishop for the holy and redeeming Celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord to the Reverend Clergy and the devout members of the Biblical Province of Thyateira, Great Britain and Ireland.

"When by Your free will You were closed up bodily in the tomb, yet remained in Your divine nature beyond confining or defining, You closed down the chambers of death and rendered Hades utterly empty, Christ King."

Dearly beloved in Lord,

After the long and reverent period of the Holy and Great Lent we were privileged this year also to celebrate the Rise of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. For this I address all of you, Peers and Laity, a wholehearted fatherly greeting of love and honour and I share with you the joy of the Apostles and the Myrrh-bearing women and the Companions of the Risen form the dead Christ, who as a victorious, trophy bearing and glorious God, invites us all to celebrate and with our hearts pure to praise Him for His infinite mercy and His love for Humankind. The Godman Christ shared our sinful nature, and with His Resurrection He shared with us of His glory and His divinity. The very event of the Resurrection is a fact of happiness and hope and faith to Him who *"is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and bestowing life on those in the graves"*. As John the Chrysostom characteristically writes *"This fact - the Resurrection of Christ- has a variety of applications, for it corrects our beliefs in doctrine and rectifies our lives"*. The Resurrection of Christ is a fact for the whole world and all humanity which fills our hearts with delightful hope for our own resurrection and our own deliverance in Christ. We, Christians of the whole world are summoned to revive the love of God with our whole existence and revive the message of Resurrection in our everyday life so that we may return to our spiritual roots and free ourselves from the inundation of secular spirit and the modern apostasy which torments modern societies, both Christian and non-Christian. *"The Easter celebrated by us is the cause for the redemption of all people, starting from the first-created man, in whom every man is saved and revitalised infinitely."*

The events of the Holy and Great Week have become the power that activated the Holy Apostles to travel to the end of the world and teach the Resurrection of Christ and manifestation of the divine love for His creatures and all His Creation: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"*. (John 3:16)

The church celebrates, treasures and bequeaths the Message and the symbols of the Resurrection from one generation to the other and summons the Faithful in each era to become communicants of the mystery of our salvation. The regular and conscientious participation in the Divine Liturgy and the communion of the flesh and blood of Christ establishes and witnesses our participation in His death and Resurrection. The family, the Christian orthodox Education, the guarding of the Children and our Youth, our participation in charity and the support of the weaker ones, our real love and care for the leading of our Churches and our Schools and the communication of the Gospel of Resurrection and our prayer for the prevailing of the Kingdom of God are calls and responsibilities of the Resurrection for all of us.

Brothers and sisters in Lord, we are participating in the enjoyment of the Resurrection through forgiving one another, through reconciliation with our brothers, concord, peace and love for the people around us, to *"forgive everyone through and because of the Resurrection"*. Wishing health, joy and peace to you and your loved ones and humility and brotherhood to the Church of Christ, I remain with the warmest blessings and the love and honour in the Resurrection of the Christ.

London, Easter 2017

Archbishop Gregorios
of Thyateira and Great Britain

To be read out from pulpit instead of other sermon on Holy Friday 14 April 2017