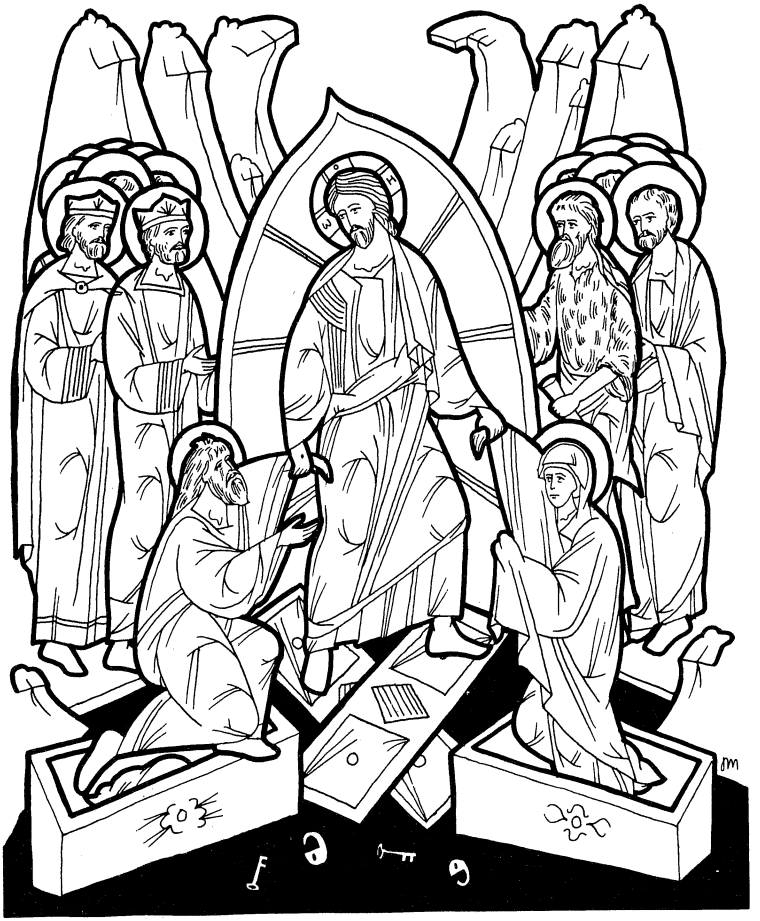

"This is the Resurrection Day. Let us be enlightened by this Feast, and let us embrace one another. Let us call 'Brethren' even those who hate us, and in the Resurrection forgive everything; and let us sing: 'Christ is risen from the dead! By death He conquered Death, and to those in the graves He granted Life.' "

Resurrection Matins

The Holy and Great Sunday of the Pasch
The Feast of the Radiant Resurrection of the Lord

Archbishop Stephen J. Kocisko

"Although You descended into the grave, O Immortal One, You destroyed the power of Death. You arose as a Victor, O Christ God. You announced to the women bearing ointment: 'Rejoice!' You gave peace to your Apostles and resurrection to the fallen."

Kontakion of the Radiant Resurrection

Christ is risen!

The holy resurrection of Christ is decisive for our redemption. From the standpoint of Byzantine theological thought, the resurrection is the foundation and the origin of our whole theological system. By His glorious resurrection, Christ proved the veracity of His incarnation. As the second Divine Person, out of love for fallen humanity, the Son of God assumed flesh, became one of us. This fact He proved and sealed for all eternity by His resurrection.

Jesus' whole life was a struggle against the Kingdom of Death. Our Lord came to conquer death and to redeem mankind from its grasp. It appeared that on Great Friday Jesus lost this struggle and death was victorious over Him. For the people who witnessed the apparent victory of death on the cross of Golgotha, Jesus remained a man despite His many miracles. Christ remained in the tomb for three days, and thus the resurrection was all the more significant and dramatic.

The fact of the resurrection was an undeniable proof of Jesus' divinity. The reality of the resurrection was the theme of the Holy Apostle Peter's first sermon to the people of Jerusalem, among whom 3,000 were converted. And ever since, our Byzantine Catholic Church has taught that the resurrection is the foundation of our Faith.

In his letter to the Romans, the Holy Apostle Paul spoke of the Radiant Resurrection of Jesus as the means by which sinners, who are in a state similar to death, are restored to life. Just as Christ has risen from the dead, so also shall we rise and sin no more. Christ's Resurrection is an example and the source of our perfection.

Considering the reward of suffering, Christ's resurrection has a tremendous moral value. Jesus' risen body was glorified. Christ's wounds remained visible as the eloquent signs of his glorious and salvific sufferings. These same wounds are to remind us of the evil of sin and the glory of sinlessness. The Paschal Feast and especially the Radiant Resurrection of the Lord are consoling facts for the life of every person. The greatest sufferings can be endured if one knows that they will be followed by such a great reward—eternal bliss. This knowledge and its realization is based on the Glorious Resurrection of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ. Indeed, He is risen!

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Acts 1:1-8
John 1:1-17