Services of Holy Pascha

Hajme - Orthros - Divine Liturgy

Educational Services
Diocese of Newton
West Newton, MA 02165
Introduction

This is the first is what we hope will be a series based on the festal services of the Byzantine Churches. It is designed to help clergy and cantors reflect on and prepare for these celebrations.

This program has three components. The first is the full text of the service with musical setting for most of the hymns included. These are principally the work of the late Archimandrite Cyril Haddad who prepared them for the diocese during his retirement.

The second component is a recording of the chants executed by Deacon Bryan McNeil of St. Joseph’s parish, Lawrence, Ma. as a tutorial for cantors.

The third component is a reflection on the Scriptural and liturgical imagery of the service by Hieromonk Damon Geiger. These notes are placed at the top of each page, in proximity to the actual text to which they pertain.

This edition also may be used as a multi-dimensional parish catechetical program. The scriptural allusions in Father Damon’s notes provides ample suggestions for homilies for the entire periods of the triodion and the pentecostarion. At the same time as these Scriptures are explained, the actual chants may be taught. Begin with the paschal stichera and the hirmoi of a few odes for the first year. Continue the next year with the rest of the hirmoi and other chants as the basis for increasing both participation and understanding.

The most effective and pleasing way to chant the canons is to have the people sing the hirmoi and the refrains while the choir or cantors sing the troparia. Various cantors or choir members, alternately men and women, might sing these troparia in turn. In this way, not everyone would have to learn each troparion and yet as much of the service as desired could be held.

Rev. Fred Saato
Director of Educational Services

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NOTES FOR A COMMENTARY ON THE PASchal SERVICE

1) THE PROCESSION OF TRIUMPH

Interesting that we start the Resurrection Service using the signs/symbols of fire/light for the risen Christ. You cannot grasp, touch or hold fire... it can touch you. As it does so, it begins to change you into itself. In the same way, the risen Christ cannot be grasped by the senses. Yet He takes control of our lives if we permit Him, and begins to change us into fire, into Himself.

No one can see light... yet all things are seen in light. Without it, nothing can be seen for what it is. In the same way, we do not see the risen Christ, yet we see all things in Him, we see all things new. Just as the lit candles light our way so that we are safe and can see things, so the risen Christ leads our steps safely, and allows us to see all things in the proper "light", i.e., Himself... He is the frame of reference for all things for us as Christians: "In Your light, we see light."

Holy Pascha

1. The Procession of Triumph

After the Midnight Service, the priest in full white vestments stands in the center of the church, holding a lighted candle, from which he invites all those present in the church to light their own. He sings:

5. Come, O faithful, and take light from the Light that never fades, and glorify Christ, who is risen from the dead.

The servers and the people light their candles from his and follow in procession outside the church, the priest holding the Holy Gospel and his assistants following behind, singing:

6. O Christ our Savior, the angels in heaven sing a hymn of praise to Your
The fire/light gives warmth, protection and direction - but precisely by consuming itself. If it does not consume itself, none of the above follows. Christ, in His paschal mystery, did exactly that. He consumes Himself for us. Now His light is given to us...we are His Body, He continues to be consumed totally for the life of the world through and in us. Taking the flame points to this.

We carry the fire of the risen Christ within us. He is not "generically" nor "abstractly" risen. He is really present, and really risen... especially in us, His Body. We are to be light-bearers into the darkness, just as our lit candles light up and destroy and drive back the darkness outside the Church as we walk in procession with the candles.

The Hajme, or rush, imitates the women coming to the tomb with desire to do what little they could for Christ even though He was "dead". It also shows their haste in bringing the light of the good news to others once they had experienced the fact that He is risen.

This is repeated until everyone is outside the church and the doors are closed.

Arriving at the analogy which has been set up, the priest intones:

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord our God that He may make us worthy to hear the Holy Gospel.
All: Lord, have mercy (three times).
Priest: Wisdom! Let us stand to hear the holy Gospel. Peace to all.
All: And to your spirit.
Priest: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to the evangelist Mark.
All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You!
Priest: Let us be attentive!

After the reading is completed:

All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You!
2) ORTHROS

a) Opening the Doors

Orthros begins like the old "cathedral" or "people's" office in Constantinople usage. The people would gather at the porch or in the narthex, singing a litany and antiphons. At one point, the "royal" (main) doors to the nave were opened, and all entered singing. The old cathedral office was a progressive movement by the people from outside toward the altar.

The reading of the Gospel outside reminds us of the angel sitting before the door of the tomb announcing the resurrection to those who had come. They then went in and saw for themselves.

2. Orthros

*The priest takes up the censer in his right hand and the candle in his left and begins:*

Priest: Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-giving and undivided Trinity, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Priest:

\[\text{Music notation here}\]

5. Christos anesti ek nekron

\[\text{Music notation here}\]

Thana to thanaton bas te

\[\text{Music notation here}\]

Sas, kai tees en dees mni

\[\text{Music notation here}\]

Ma si zo in kharisa

\[\text{Music notation here}\]

Me nos.

All:

\[\text{Music notation here}\]

5. Christ is risen from the dead and by His death He
Christos a-nes-ti ek nek-ron, tha-na-to

Priest: Let God arise and His enemies will scatter and those who hate him will flee before Him.

All:
Priest: As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish and melt as wax before the fire.
All: Christ is risen...
Priest: So do sinners perish before God; but let the just exult with joy before Him.
All: Al-Maseehu qama...
Priest: This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice therein.
All: Christos anesti...
Priest: Glory... Now...
All: Christ is risen...

Then once more, very solemnly:

5. Priest: Christ is risen from the dead,
and by His death He has trampled upon

Death: All: And has given

life to those who were in the tombs.
The litany, with a text proper to Melkites, refers to entrance into the bridal chamber of Christ. In Scripture, the Lord spoke of the Kingdom in its fulness as a wedding banquet. Many parables refer to that imagery, as does the book of Revelation. We are to be the bride of the Lamb, but we must be wearing the proper garment (see Exapostilarion). In the petitions, we ask the grace to live out the victory of the Lord in our lives, triumphing over all temptations, that we may be worthy to be crowned with Him at the wedding banquet.

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: For peace from on high and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

That the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, may grant us triumph and victory over the temptations of our visible and invisible enemies, let us pray to the Lord.

That we may crush beneath our feet the Prince of Darkness and his powers, let us pray to the Lord.

That He may raise us with Him and make us rise from the tomb of our sins and offences, let us pray to the Lord.

That He may fill us with the joy and happiness of His holy resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.

That we may deserve the grace of entering into the chamber of His divine wedding feast and rejoice beyone limit, together with His heavenly attendants and the hosts of saints glorified through Him in the Church triumphant in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are our light and resurrection, O Christ our God, and we render glory to You, to Your eternal Father and to Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
The verses at the closed door are from psalm 24. Many scholars feel that this was a liturgical psalm, used for a feast in which the Ark of the Covenant was carried in procession... this dialogue would have been used at the gates of the temple on the return of the procession... it was a sign of God going at the head of His triumphant people in victory. Certainly this is fulfilled in Pascha when the risen Christ leads us back into paradise which had been closed by our sins.

Lent began, at Forgiveness Vespers, with a closing of the doors of the altar, drawing the curtain, changing the color of the vestments and introducing a more somber melody to the rest of the service. That Sunday was a remembrance of Adam/Eve's expulsion from Eden... we are not in Paradise... things are not right... we are excluded, in that we cannot regain entry on our own. The Paschal service begins by throwing open the doors of the Church at the touch of the Cross. The Lord has opened Paradise again, which we had closed. The opening doors call to mind the open tomb, when the angel(s) rolled back the stone. Access is given to us again to Eden... the Gospel goes in first, the Lord leading us through death to resurrection and the fulness of life.

The priest, knocking on the church door with a handcross, alternates these verses of Psalm 33 with the sexton:

Priest: Lift up your gates, O you princes, and be lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in.

Sexton: Who is this King of glory?

Priest: The Lord who is strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your gates, O you princes, and be lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in.

Sexton: Who is this King of glory?

Priest: The Lord who is strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your gates, O you princes, and be lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in.

Sexton: Who is this King of glory?

Priest: The Lord of hosts: He is the King of glory.

The priest opens the doors of the Church and all go in with lighted candles, singing the Canon.

Canon of Saint John of Damascus

First Ode

1. To-day is the Day of the Resurrection:

O nations, let us be joyful! For this
b) Canon

The Canon is an older part of Orthros, evolving from the Seventh Century Palestinian urban monastic office. Then nine Biblical canticles were chanted at the nightly vigil/orthros. Later, liturgical verses were intercalated between the strophes of the canticles. Finally, the canticles were suppressed, retaining only the liturgical verses with a short response between them. Usually the Hirmoi show the connection with the former canticles.

The Paschal Canon, composed by St. John of Damascus (676-749), incorporates texts from paschal sermons by Sts. Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom. Because of its exquisite poetic beauty and profound theology, it is called the "Golden Canon."
First Ode - Canticle of Moses (Exodus 15:1-19): In the canticle, Moses and the people sing a song of victory to God after their "Pascha": they have been delivered from slavery and death by God's mighty hand. He led them through water to safety, drowning the oppressing foe behind them.

This is fulfilled in our Pascha. Christ has passed through death to life, destroying death in the process. We make the same passover with Him through baptism, in which we enter into His death and resurrection... through water we are led to safety and freedom, the promised land, while our enemy (death, sin, evil) is destroyed behind us in the water. We sing a "passover" hymn of victory to the saving God in the same way.

ly hear Him say, 'Rejoice' as we sing the song of victory.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit now and always and forever and ever, amen.

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice.

Let the whole world, visible and invisible keep the feast, for Christ
After each ode we sing:

Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death
He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs. (3 times)

Having risen from the grave as He foretold,
Jesus has granted us eternal life and great mercy.
Third Ode - Canticle of Hannah (I Samuel 1:1-10): Hannah had been barren, sterile, unable to be fruitful on her own. By God’s intervention, she became a fruitful mother, giving birth to Samuel, a “deliverer” for his people. In the same way, we as a Church sing this canticle: we were “Gentiles”, barren, unable to bring about salvation or be fruitful. In His mercy, God acted in our lives, making us the Church, a fruitful mother that brings about deliverance. In His Resurrection, Christ acts, taking us to Himself as His bride... we become fruitful. Before, by sin, we could not "produce", but the risen Lord recreates and espouses us. In the canticle, God is called "Rock". (v. 2). The Hirmos also makes an allusion to this, recalling the story of God refreshing His people by having a rock struck in the wilderness (Exodus 17:6). Paul says that this was a type of Christ (I Cor. 10:4), who was "struck" on the side, pouring forth water and blood which gave us a new drink (Hirmos).

Little Synapte

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For Yours is the dominion and Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Third Ode

Come, let us drink a new drink: not miraculously produced from a barren rock, but from the fount of immortality.
springing forth from the tomb of Christ, in which we are established.

Glory to Your holy resurrection, O Lord!

Now all is filled with light: heaven and earth and the lower regions. Let all creation celebrate the rising of Christ, in which it is established.
The Canticle (v 6) also speaks of the Lord putting to death and giving life, casting down to the nether world, and raising up again...fulfilled in Paschal mystery. The last Troparion in this Ode speaks of us as being crucified and rising with Christ, being put to death and raised up by our baptismal participation in the mystery. (The newly-baptized who were present at this liturgy would resonate with this.) It is a direct quote from a sermon by Gregory the Theologian.

Glo-ry to the Fa-ther and to the Son and
to the Ho-ly Spi-rit now and al-
ways and for-e-ver and e-ver, a-men.

Yes-ter-day I was bu-ried with You, O Christ;
to-day I a-rise with You in Your re-sur-
rec-tion. Yes-ter-day I was cru-ci-fied
with You: glo-ri-fy me with You, O Sa-vior,
in Your king-dom.
After each ode we sing:

Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death
He has trampled upon Death and has given
life to those who were in the tombs. (3 times)

Having risen from the grave as He foretold,
Jesus has granted us eternal life
and great mercy.

Little Synapte

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.
Hypacoi - is an old hymn form taken from the Jerusalem Church and incorporated into the present synthesis of our Office. It is like a Troparion. Originally, these were used in Jerusalem for the "Office of the Myrrh-bearing Women", the Jerusalem resurrectional vigil every Saturday night. There is a hypacoi for each tone, and it is used in that part of Sunday Orthros that comes from the old Jerusalem office, sung while the Anastasis was incensed before the bishop read the resurrection Gospel from the tomb.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are our God and we render glory to You - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

\[ Hypacoe \]

4. Mary and her companions went forth before dawn. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb and heard the angel say,

"Why do you seek Him among the dead, when He is eternal splen-"
Fourth Ode - Canticle of Habakkuk (Hab. 3:1-19): Habakkuk lived in a difficult time for the people of God. Weak within through idolatry and trust in politics and "science", as well as infidelity to the Law and Covenant, they were threatened by the growing power of Babylon. In the canticle, he sings apocalyptic prophecies about God's saving work in the past. He sees the Lord coming, filled with light and radiance, to deliver His people (vv 3-4, 13).

Christ is that light-filled risen Savior who is the salvation and deliverance of the world (Hirmos). The first two Troparia of the Ode refers to Christ as the Passover Lamb (see Exodus 12:5-14; I Cor. 5:7-8). The last two Troparia refer to David rejoicing at the ark coming into the midst of the people of God (2 Samuel 6:11-15; see also vv. 18-19 of this canticle).
gel who proclaims with vibrant voice: Today salvation comes to the world, for Christ is risen as all-powerful.

Glory to Your holy resurrection, O Lord!

Christ our Pascha has appeared as a male child who opens the Virgin's womb. He is called the Lamb, as One destined to be our food: unblemished, for He has not tasted of de-
Refrain: Glory to Your holy resurrection, O Lord!

Christ, our blessed Crown has been freely immolated for all as a yearling paschal Lamb of purification. And from the grave He did shine again upon us as a Sun of Righteousness.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and
The Ark is a prototype which is fulfilled in Christ. The Ark was the means of God's presence to the people. The whole Trinity was prefigured within (the tablets of the Father's Law, the rod of Aaron - the Spirit's select one - and the vessel of manna - the heavenly bread, the Son). In Christ, the whole Trinity is present. To stand before Him, as before the Ark, is to be before God. The Ark was the sign and "container" of the Covenant. Christ is Himself the Covenant. The lid of the Ark was the propitiatory, the mercy-seat: the place where God's loving-kindness was manifested. Christ is that (see Heb. 4:16; I Cor. 1:30).

David, the ancestor of God, leaped and danced before the Ark, which prefigured You. Now let us, the holy people of God, seeing the fulfillment of all figures, rejoice in piety, for Christ is risen as all powerful.
After each ode we sing:

Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs. (3 times)

Having risen from the grave as He foretold, Jesus has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

Little Synapte

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.
Fifth Ode - Canticle of Isaiah (Isaiah 26:9-20): The prophet worked during the 8th Century BC, a trying time for the people of God. This canticle is from the second phase of his ministry when the messianic oracles were given. In this hymn, he foretells God's ultimate victory over his enemies. Fitting for the paschal service, it speaks of longing for the Lord and keeping watch through the night (v. 9). It speaks of being ruled in the past by "other lords" (death) before being delivered and set free (vv. 13-14). We were unable to bring about salvation on our own (vv. 16-18); now God has freed us and given us life. The end speaks of hope in the resurrection (v. 19). The last verse (2) alludes to the passover celebration (Exodus 12). The faithful remained indoors while God, their vindicator, slew the firstborn of the oppressors. The Hirmos of the ode refers to the first verses of the canticle: keeping vigil through the night for the coming of dawn. The saving light that dawns is Christ, the Sun of Justice (see v. 9 of canticle).

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are good, O our God, and You love mankind and we render glory to You - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Fifth Ode

Let us rise at the break of dawn; let us bring our hymns of praise to the Master instead of ointments, and we shall see Christ the Sun of Righteousness, causing life to dawn for all.

21
The second troparion refers to Christ’s descent into Sheol as a light to deliver those who awaited Him, making them pass over to the Kingdom. The final troparion refers to the parable of the watchful virgins keeping watch for the Bridegroom. With Him we enter the Bridal chamber, the wedding feast of the Lamb (see Rev. 19:6-9; 2 Cor. 11:2; Matt. 26:29; plus the parables referring to His coming as the beginning of a wedding banquet).

Glo- ry to Your ho- ly re- sur- rec- tion, 0 Lord!

O Christ, those who were bound in the chains of hell

see- ing Your bound-less com- pas- sion, pressed

onward to the light with joy-ful steps, praising

the e-ter-nal Pas- cha.

Glo- ry to the Fa- ther and to the Son and
to the Ho- ly Spi - rit now and al-

ways and for-e ver and e - ver, a - men.
Let us go with lamps in hand to meet Christ, who comes forth from the tomb like a bridegroom. And with the feasting multitudes let us celebrate the saving Pascha of our God.

Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs. (3 times)

Having risen from the grave as He foretold,
Sixth Ode - *Canticle of Jonah (Jonah 2:3-10)*: This is a prayer of thanks by Jonah after being delivered from the belly of the whale where he had remained for three days. Jonah is an obvious type of Christ and His Resurrection, not only in the whale incident, but in the fact that he preached and people repented and returned to God, being delivered (the "sign of Jonah" is thus more than resurrection). The canticle points to pascha in itself: crying for help from death and the nether world (vv. 3-7); being "raised up" by God from death (v. 7); being faithful and praying from within the tomb (cf the Epitaphios service, Psalm 118/119 and the "Evlogitaria" - the prayer of the just Christ to His Father from the tomb, declaring that He had kept His word and done His will - answered in Resurrection).

Little Synapte

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For blessed and glorified is Your most honorable and magnificent name - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Sixth Ode

O Christ, when You went down into the deep-
The Hirmos refers to this whole theme ("the indestructible chains...", see v.7 of canticle). The second Troparion continues the theme, but plays on opening/closing. Christ passed through the virgin's seal as He did through the seal of the tomb, not breaking them...yet the "seal" barring us from Eden was broken.

The final Troparion again refers to the Lord as the Passover Lamb... in the passing, not only does the Lord go, but also Adam, whose nature He had assumed (cf. icon of the harrowing of Hell). Since Adam is the father of the race, we are all inherently present in Him as well as in Christ, the new Adam, the new head of the race. The whole book of Jonah, including the canticle, was written against a spirit of nationalism or ethnicity among the people of God: God wanted the salvation of all, not just of the Jews. In the last Troparion, that universal salvation of all in Adam is mentioned.
womb remained unharmed. And You have opened

for us the gates of Paradise.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and
to the Holy Spirit now and al-
ways and for-ever and e-ver, a-men.

O my Savior, living and un-sac-rifi-ced

Victim, as God You brought Yourself

freely to the Father. And You raised with
You A-dam, the fa-ther of us all, when

You rose from the tomb.

Christ is ri-sen from the dead, and by His death

He has trampled up-on Death and has giv-en

life to those who were in the tombs. (3 times)

Ha-ving ri-sen from the grave as He fore-told,

Je-sus has grant-ed us e-ter-nal life

and great mer-cy.
Little Synapte

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

   Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are the King of peace and the Savior of our souls and we render glory to You - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Kondakion

2. Though You went down in the tomb, O immortal One, You overthrew the power of Hades and rose victorious,
Priest: Before the break of dawn the ointment bearing women hastened to the Sun, who existed before the sun was made but disappeared for a while in the tomb. They were seeking Him as one would seek the light of day, saying to each other: “Come, friends, let us anoint with spices the body which is a source of life but is now buried, the Body which raised the fallen Adam but is now lying in the grave. Let us hasten to adore Him as did the wise men and offer Him our gifts of spices. He is now wrapped in a shroud, not in swaddling clothes. Let us cry out and say, ‘Arise, O Master, who give to those who had fallen, resurrection.”

Ikos
Seventh Ode - Canticle of the Three Youths (Daniel 3:26-56): This is part of the prayer of the three youths in the furnace. Shadrach, Mesach and Abednego are Jewish exiles in Babylon. By God’s grace they have risen to positions of power. Trying to remain faithful to their relationship with God and their identity as part of the chosen people, they refused idolatry and participation in the materialism and the “world-view” in which they lived. This produced tension in their lives, leading ultimately to their being cast into the fiery furnace. From the midst of that “punishment” this prayer comes. In the Canticle, they acknowledge that all the suffering comes from their sinfulness.

If we experience pain in this world, a tension between what we are and what we are supposed to be, it is because we have introduced sin and evil into the creation. The dichotomy (sacred/secular) or schizophrenia is produced by us: we suffer because we must choose sides; but the “punishment”, “exile” is caused by us originally, not by God. This is what the canticle says. The youths embrace the situation, remaining faithful to God, and the fire does not destroy them. Rather God appears with them in its midst and they are set free by the ordeal: not even the smell of the fire clings to them.

Synaxarion

On the Holy and Great Sunday of Pascha we celebrate the life bearing resurrection of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Christ, going down alone to the struggle with Hades, came forth again and brought with Him abundant spoils of victory. To Him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

Reader: Now that we have seen the resurrection of Christ, let us adore + the all-holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless One. We bow + in worship before Your cross, O Christ, and we praise and glorify Your resurrection, for You are our God and we have no other and we magnify Your name. All you faithful, come: let us adore + the holy resurrection of Christ; for, behold, through the cross, joy has come to the world! Let us always bless the Lord, let us sing His resurrection, for by enduring for us the pain of the cross, He has crushed Death by His death (three times).

Seventh Ode
In the Paschal Mystery, death is present as a reality in the cosmos... we caused it by introducing the dichotomy and schizophrenia... we must live with what we created. Yet God joins us in the "fire" by His paschal mystery. He goes down into the fire (death) with us... He brings us through unscathed... not even the smell of corruption clings to us. Jesus went down into the fiery death and tomb. He shares our death. From the tomb He praises His Father (cf Psalm 118 which the lamentations in the Epitaphios service once accompanied, and later replaced). It is His prayer to the Father in the "furnace". He is answered in the Resurrection, and lifts us up out of the furnace with Himself.
The liturgical ode can be related to this. The Hirmos speaks of Christ's identification with us in the furnace of death. We receive "unburnt" clothing of immortality in passing through... there is not even the whiff of death and mortality (See John 11:39-43). In the first Troparion, the women come as to a defeat at the "furnace" of the tomb... but they find instead the victory of Divinity: God meeting man in the furnace (see Daniel 3:91-95).

The second Troparion also talks about the destruction of that punishment to which we had condemned ourselves. The final Troparion points to the triumph of light over darkness, death over the tomb. It is a "bright night": night, which should show the triumph of darkness over light, has become itself changed into victory of light, like the furnace and the tomb.
to the Holy Spirit now and always and forever and ever, amen.

How holy and most solemnly festive is this bright and saving night! It heralds the glorious day of the resurrection, in which the timeless Light shone forth bodily from the tomb for all.

Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death
He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs. (3 times)

Having risen from the grave as He foretold,

Jesus has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

Little Synapte

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.
Eighth Ode - Canticle of the Three Youths (Daniel 3:57ff.): This hymn is the continuation of the praises and prayers of the three young men in the furnace, who went down into it by faith, and were joined by God who brought about victory over what should have been defeat. In this part, the whole creation is called upon to praise God from the midst of the fire.

Pascha marks a new creation, that is why the Gospel reading at the Divine Liturgy is the prologue of John... it is the beginning of a new creation, a passing through death to new life, abundant life, free and full life. All the cosmos is effected by it, since Christ in the tomb had assumed our nature, which in turn assumes the whole creation. His Resurrection is the resurrection of our nature, and thus of the whole cosmos, which is invited to pass through the paschal mystery and be recreated, set free (cf Romans 8:18-27).

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Blessed and glorified be the might of Your kingdom - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Eighth Ode

This holy and blessed day is the first of the week: the King and Master of all days, the Feast of feasts and the Season of seasons.

On this day we bless Christ forever and ever.

Glory to Your holy resurrection, O Lord!

Come, on this chosen day of the resurrection.
The liturgical ode relates to this understanding of creation. In the Hirmos, Pascha is referred to as the great First/Eighth day, the basic Mystery we celebrate in all festivals and all seasons. As God finished the "first", broken creation on the sixth day, resting on the seventh (the Sabbath) - so He now begins the new creation on the "eighth" day (the first of the new creation). We bless Christ continually since we are part of this new, ongoing creation. The last line even hearkens back to the recurring refrain in the biblical canticle... all creation blessing God as it passes through fire and is "re-cast", "re-created" with Christ in His death/Resurrection.

The first Troparion speaks of the new fruit of the vine (See Matthew 26:29). Christ tells us that when we eat and drink with Him again after His Pascha, we are actually doing so in the new creation, the Kingdom. So, in each Eucharist, we are experiencing that newness and fulness of the true creation. Wine has always been a sign of rejoicing, a gift of God (cf Psalm 103(104):15), pointing to the inebriation in the Spirit which is poured out on us in the Kingdom (Joel 3:1-5; 4:17-18; Acts 2:13; Ephesians 5:18-20).
The second Troparion is taken from Isaiah 60. It refers to the "new Zion", the new People of God, re-created and reassembled after the exile. Passing through Pascha, the Church emerges as the Mother of the new creation, rejoicing in the children born again, freed from death, filled with light. They assemble like stars...referring back to God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:5; 22:17) fulfilled in Christ, who by His Paschal Mystery becomes the new head and Father of the recreated human race.

The last Troparion of the eighth ode normally refers to the Trinity, since it goes with the verse of the Canticle, "We bless the Father, the Son, etc..." Here it refers to baptism, our entering into the "name" of the Trinity, being re-created by passing through Christ's death, dying and rising again.
Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs. (3 times)

Having risen from the grave as He foretold,

Jesus has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

**Little Synapte**

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).
Ninth Ode - Canticle of the Theotokos (Luke 1:46-55): Mary's Canticle is the hymn of the Church... she is the prototype of the Church, Virgin and Mother. She is the womb of God, the place where God becomes present in the creation, the "locus" of the union of heaven and earth. All that Mary is, the Church is to be: the Virgin Bride and Mother of the new creation, giving her own flesh to it. We always sing it as Church, knowing that we have been chosen and set aside for her vocation... knowing that we are "blessed" forever because of God's activity in us.

The liturgical ode continues that theme. The Hirmos refers to Isaiah 60, again, mentioned in the last ode. We are the new Jerusalem, the new Mother of the recreated nations. Christ is hailed as the true and new Pascha, the authentic Passover Lamb. By His Blood, we are marked, delivered, passed safely through water and given a promised Land. In partaking of Him we have a true communion of life with God and each other... we have the new and eternal covenant prefigured by the old.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.
Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, 0 Lord.

Priest: For Your name is blessed and Your kingdom glorified, - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Deacon: Let us magnify with hymns the Theotokos, the Mother of light!

Ninth Ode

I J J I J

v. Magnify, 0 my soul, the life-giving Christ,
who on the third day has risen from the dead.

r.1 Shine, shine, 0 new Jerusalem! For the glory of the Lord has shone upon You. Rejoice and be glad, 0 Sion, and
you, O pure one, O Mother of God, exult in the resurrection of your Son.

v. Magnify, O my soul, the One who willingly suffered and was buried and arose on the third day. r.l Shine, shine...

v. Christ is the new Pass-over, the sacrificed Victim: the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
The third verse refers to Christ's sweet voice making a promise (Matthew 28:20). The Paschal Mystery puts Christ into a new relationship with us and the cosmos. He is our true Self... He is the Image and Likeness of God, the true Son by Essence. We are the image and likeness of God, sons by adoption... He is our true Self, at the very center of our being, and thus never absent from us. His Resurrected body, assuming the whole creation, puts Him into intimate contact with the whole of the cosmos... it subsists in Him (see John 1:1-4; Col. 2:9-15; esp. Col. 1:15-23). Another refrain speaks of Christ as the Wisdom and Word of God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:22-31) who allows us to partake of the newness of His Kingdom (cf. Col. 1:13-14; Eph. 1:3-10; 2 Peter 1:10-11).
r. 2 How noble, how dear...

r. 3 O great and all holy and true Passover:

O Christ, Wisdom and Word and Power of God! Grant us to partake of You more perfectly in the everlasting day of Your heavenly kingdom.
v. Re-joice, O Vir-gin, re-joice! Re-joice, O bless-ed one! Re-joice, O glo-ri-ous one! For your Son has ri-son from the tomb on the third day.

Kata-basis
The an-gel cried out to the one who is full of grace: Hail, O im-ma-cu-late vir-gin!

Hail! a-gain: for your Son is ri-

sen from the tomb on the third day.
Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem! For the glory of the Lord has shone upon You. Rejoice and be glad, O Sion, and you, O pure one, O Mother of God, exult in the resurrection of your Son.

Christ is risen from the dead, and by His death He has trampled upon Death and has given
Having risen from the grave as He foretold,
Jesus has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

Little Synapte

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For all the powers of heaven sing Your praise and we render glory to You - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
Exapostilarion - Wonderful allusions to the imagery of the Old Testament, and their fulfillment are made here. Christ fell asleep on the tree: making us think of the first Adam fall asleep under the tree (Gen. 2:21). From the side of the sleeping first Adam came Eve...the Mother of the living, life. From the second Adam's opened side, as He slept in the tomb and on the Cross, came the Church, the new Eve, the new mother of the Living (prefigured by the Virgin). Christ becomes the Bridegroom of the Church; in our union with Him, we become truly the mother of life. The first Adam fell asleep in death; the second Adam, Christ, arose from that sleep, and aroused the first Adam and the whole human race from it, thus providing a "passing over" from death to life and salvation for the whole cosmos.

Exapostilarion

2. You fell asleep in Your body, O King and Lord of all mankind. Then

You rose on the third day, raising Adam from corruption and destroying Death: You the immortal Passover and the salvation of the world. (three times)

Ainos (First Tone)

1. Let ev'ry thing that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise
The Praises - In Orthros, if timed correctly, the Praises (Ainos) were sung by the people as the light of the risen sun flooded the church building (and the whole world), driving out the last shadows and vestiges of the dark night. In itself, the Ainos is always a sign of the Resurrection. Today especially, the psalm verses and liturgical verses reflect on the mystery. They are the stichera sung every Sunday on which the First Tone of the Oktoechos is prescribed.

Reader: O Christ, we sing a hymn of praise to Your passion and we glorify Your resurrection.

Praise Him with the blast of the horn, praise Him with the harp and zither.
Reader: O good One, who suffered crucifixion for our sake, destroyed Death and rose from the dead, establish Your peace in our life, for You alone are almighty.

Praise Him with timbrel and chorus, praise Him with strings and pipe.

Reader: O Christ, who by Your resurrection despoiled Hades and raised us from Death, make us worthy to praise You and glorify You with pure hearts.

Praise Him with resounding cymbals, praise Him with cymbals of glory, may every thing that breathes praise the Lord.

Reader: O Christ, we sing a hymn of praise to You and glorify Your holy condescension. You were born of the Virgin without being separated from the Father. You suffered in the body and accepted crucifixion of Your own free will. You rose from the tomb as from a wedding chamber to save the world. Glory to You, O Lord.
Paschal Stichera - This liturgical unit is a combination of verses from psalm 24 (fulfilled in the paschal mystery - see 2a above) and liturgical verses reflecting on the mystery. The reflection begins by speaking of a "new, noble, holy, blameless, glorious" Passover. Whenever the people of the Old Law celebrated the annual Passover (Pascha) it was with a bittersweet sense of longing. They remembered the Exodus deliverance, felt its power in their lives, yet strained forward to an ultimate fulfillment. Later renditions of it ended with "Next year in Jerusalem!", a poignant wish for, a straining toward the fulfillment.

In the Resurrection of Christ, that fulfillment has been given and achieved. Thus our Passover is the realization of all that generations have yearned for... it is not a mystic "type" but a present reality. The longing for Paradise (full communion with God and each other, the destroying of shackles and bonds), which could never be achieved by mankind on its own, is now suddenly and freely bestowed as a gift.

Paschal Stichera (fifth tone)

V. Let God arise and His enemies will scatter; and those who hate Him will flee before Him.

Our Pass-over, Christ the Redeemer, is revealed to us today as a noble Pass-over. This is a new and holy Pass-over, a mystical Pass-over, a blameless Pass-over, a glorious Pass-over, a Pass-over for the faithful, a Pass-over that opens for us the gates of paradise, a Pass-over that sanctifies
The next verses speak of the myrrh-bearing women. These are the first "witnesses" of the risen Lord. By their loving fidelity, they did all that was possible to be with the Lord... even if it meant only an attempt to go and complete the funeral rituals. They knew that a heavy stone lay between them and the body of the Lord, yet in their love they did the best they could. The apostles, meanwhile, were hiding in the upper room in despair, paralyzed by fear.

The women's fidelity and efforts were rewarded. The Lord Himself removed the obstacles and stood before them. They experienced Him as risen because they had reached out to Him. Because of this experience, they are then made the first real "apostles" (one who are sent with the authority of the sender to bear official messages with power). They are commissioned to go and announce the Gospel (the Good News of the Resurrection and its effects). They could only receive this commission because they had experienced the risen Lord.
In this way, the myrrhbearers are "types" of the Church and all Christians. We are to reach out to the Lord the best we can... we must truly experience Him ourselves... only then do we have "Good News" (Gospel) for the world that is truly empowered. Part of the problem of the Church today is that we weakly proclaim as Good News something that we have never really experienced in our own lives... because we do not reach out enough with loving fidelity and surrender to the Lord. Thus our proclamation lacks the transforming power it could and should have... and the world is not impressed. The last verse before the Doxastikhon repeats that this Passover, if experienced, will fill us with joy and power, a power that breaks all divisions and obstacles. If we haven't experienced it, we have no "happy news".
...and proclaim that Christ has risen from the dead.

This is the day the Lord has made: let us be glad and rejoice therein.

A glorious Passover has shone upon us: a Passover of the Lord, a Passover perfectly honorable. Let us then embrace one another with joy: 0 what a Passover delivering from sorrow!

For Christ, coming out of the tomb as from a
bridal chamber, fills the women

with joy by telling them to bring this happy news

to the disciples.

Glorry to the Father and
to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; now and

ever and ever, amen.
The Doxastikhon and Paschal Kiss - The Paschal kiss is important in this service. The biggest proof of the power of sin is the presence of divisions in the world. Sin always leads to divisiveness: the ultimate of which is death, the separation of body, soul and spirit. The sign of victory over sin is union and communion. Thus the giving of the paschal kiss is a sign that we share in the victory over sin and death, i.e., victory over "dis-communion". The risen Christ grants us a share in His victory, we live the very life and love of God; and that love dispels all dissensions and hatreds.

During this hymn the clergy and people come forward to kiss the Holy Gospel, the icon of the resurrection, and each other. They greet each other by saying:

Christ is risen!
He is truly risen!

Today is the day of the resurrection: let us glory in this feast and embrace one another. O brethren, let us say, "Because of the resurrection we forgive all things to those who hate..."
Resurrection Homily - This Paschal homily of Chrysostom was once a major event in the service. It was not "read", but "proclaimed"! The people took an enthusiastic part in it. It is almost like the first proclamation of the Good News made by the whole Church, made present in the community. The whole community begins to announce the Gospel. The priest enthusiastically intones the homily...the people interject "He is truly risen...", "Amen...", etc., underlining the importance of what is being proclaimed... it is their proclamation also. We begin by proclaiming the Good News to one another as Church... and break forth to the four corners of the world with the news.

Notice, too, what is being said. Redemption has come, not by our efforts (our programs, policies, works...not even by our keeping of the fast)... it is a free gift, unexpected, glorious ("grace"). All we can do is to receive it thankfully and joyfully. It is not just for us, but for the whole of the cosmos.

At the end, the priest reads the Resurrection Homily of St. John Chrysostom.
The Divine Liturgy - The Liturgy today, and every Vespers, Orthros and Liturgy during the whole of this New Week and on the Leave-taking includes an initial solemn incensation of the holy table. The holy table symbolically is the "tomb" of the Lord. From that tomb flows life for the world: a paradox that a tomb is the Source of Life for all.

3. The Divine Liturgy

Immediately after "Blessed is the Kingdom...", the singing of "Christ is risen" with the verses, page 3 above, is repeated, as at the beginning of Orthros.

First Antiphon

Reader: Shout joyfully to God, all you on earth.
All: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.
Reader: Sing praise to the glory of His name; proclaim His glorious praise.
All: Through the prayers...
Reader: Say to God, "How tremendous are Your deeds! For Your great strength Your enemies fawn upon You."
All: Through the prayers...
Reader: Glory... Now...
All: Through the prayers...

Second Antiphon

Reader: May God be propitious to us and bless us; may He let His face shine upon us and have mercy on us.
All: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, alleluia.
Reader: May Your name be known upon earth; among all nations Your salvation.
All: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead...
Reader: May the peoples praise You, O God; may all the peoples praise You.
All: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead...
Reader: Glory... Now...
All: Only begotten Son...

Third Antiphon

Reader: Let God arise and His enemies will scatter and those who hate him will flee before Him.
All: Christ is risen from the dead and by His death He has trampled upon death, and has given life to those who were in the tombs.
Reader: As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish and melt as wax before the fire.
All: Christ is risen from the dead...
Reader: So do sinners perish before God; but let the just exult with joy before Him.
All: Christ is risen from the dead...
Reader: This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice therein.
All: Christ is risen from the dead...

Entrance Hymn

2. In your assemblies bless the Lord our God,

from the springs of Israel. O Son...

The Troparia

Christ is risen... (three times)
The Hypakoe (Mary and her companions..., page 16)
The Kondakion (Though You went..., page 30)

Instead of the Trisagion we sing "All of you who have been baptized..."

Prokimenon (Tone Eight)

& This is the day the Lord has made; let us

be glad and rejoice in it.
Reader: Give praise to the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endures forever.
All: This is the day...
Reader: This is the day the Lord has made:
All: Let us be glad and rejoice in it.

*Alleluia (Tone Four)*

v. You shall arise and have mercy upon Sion: for the time to pity her, the right time, has come.
v. The Lord has looked down from heaven upon all the sons of men.

*Instead of "It is truly right..., we sing the Katabasia of the Ninth Ode, "The angel cried..., page 45).*

*Koinonikon*

L. Receive the body, the body of Christ, and drink from the Fountain of immortality. *Alleluia.*
The Paschal Blessings - At the end of the service two types of blessings have become customary. In the first (eggs, meat and cheese) we bless the principal foods proscribed during the Great Fast. In the 'Southern' Churches, it is chiefly eggs which are blessed as sign of the life-giving tomb of Christ. The Slavic Churches bless all these foods, usually brought in the "Easter baskets" of the faithful.

The second blessing is that of the Artos or Paschal Bread. This loaf of bread represents - like the Eucharistic Lamb - Christ the Victim-Priest. It is generally kept on an analogion in the church throughout the New Week to represent the presence of the risen Christ. It is eaten after the Liturgy on Saturday.

The troparion "Christ is risen..." is sung:

- a) Instead of "We have seen the true light..."
- b) Three times, instead of "Blessed be the name of the Lord..."

It has become customary to conclude with one or more of the following blessings.

**Blessing of Eggs (and Cheese)**

Let us pray to the Lord.

O Master, Lord our God, Creator and Maker of all things, bless (this cheese and) these eggs, and preserve us in Your loving kindness; so that, as we partake of them, we also may be filled with Your gifts which You bestow in Your unspeakable goodness. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

**Blessing of Meat**

Let us pray to the Lord.

Look down, Lord Jesus Christ our God, upon this meat and sanctify it as You sanctified the ram which the faithful Abraham offered to You, the lamb which Abel brought as a burnt-offering to You, and the the fatted calf which You commanded to be slain for Your son who had gone astray and had returned to You; so that, even as he was counted worthy to enjoy Your good things, so may we also enjoy these things, sanctified and blessed by You for the nourishment of all. For You are our true nourishment and the Giver of all good things, and to You we render glory, with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

**Blessing of the Artos**

Let us pray to the Lord.

Omnipotent God, Almighty Lord, who, upon the exodus from Egypt and the liberation of Your people from the bitter bondage of Pharaoh, commanded through Your servant Moses that a Lamb be slain, foreshadowing Your beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb which was freely slain on the cross for our sake, taking away the sins of the whole world: now, we humbly entreat You, look upon this bread, bless it and sanctify it. We, Your servants
offer it before Your majesty on this most radiant, all-glorious and saving day of Pascha, commemorating the glorious resurrection of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have received freedom and release from the eternal works of the Enemy and the indissoluble bonds of hell. Grant that we who offer it and all who shall kiss it and taste of it, may be partakers of Your heavenly blessing. Rout out from us as well all sickness and infirmity, granting health to all. For You are the source of blessing and the bestower of health and to You we render glory - to the eternal Father, with Your only begotten Son and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit - now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

After the dismissal we sing "Christ is risen" three times and conclude with the Paschal proclamation as at the end of Orthros.