

Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden's
Episcopal Encyclical on Easter 2025

Dearly Beloved Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

On this glorious feast of Pascha, we come together as a family to celebrate the most significant event in the Christian faith—the Resurrection of our Lord. It is a day of victory, a day of renewal, a day of joy, and a day of hope. The message of Easter is simple, yet profound: Christ is risen indeed!

St. Athanasios the Great speaks powerfully about the significance of Christ's Resurrection: "For He was made man that we might be made God. And He manifested Himself by means of a body that we might receive the adoption as sons." (On the Incarnation, 54)

In Christ's Resurrection, we see that Christ transforms death itself. What was an end to existence, is now the gateway to eternal life. As St. John Chrysostom proclaims in his Paschal Homily: "Christ is risen, and life reigns! Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave!" (St. John Chrysostom, Paschal Homily)

St. Gregory the Theologian speaks of the Resurrection as the beginning of a new creation: "The tomb is the source of immortality, and the Resurrection is the restoration of the world." (Oration 45)

Apostle Paul writes in his Epistle to the Corinthians: "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

St. Irenaeus, a profound voice in the early Church, teaches us: "The glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man is the vision of God." (Against Heresies, 4.20.7)

"The Resurrection is the crown of the whole work of salvation, for through it, we pass from death to life, and from corruption to incorruption." (St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Gospel of John)

The hymns of Pascha echo the great victory of Christ. St. Basil the Great emphasized the importance of the Paschal liturgy in the life of the Church. He writes: "The whole creation rejoices in the resurrection of Christ; the heavens, the earth, the seas, and all that is within them." (Homily on the Resurrection)

Our celebration of Pascha is not just a remembrance of a past event; it is a participation in the reality of the Resurrection. The Paschal feast invites us to experience the joy of Christ's victory, to partake of the divine life, and to renew our hope in the eternal life He offers.

As St. John Chrysostom declares: "Let no one mourn that he has fallen again and again; for forgiveness has risen from the grave." (Paschal Homily)

Let us experience this holy feast with hearts filled with spiritual joy and hope, knowing that Christ has triumphed over death, and through Him, we too shall live forever!

With paternal blessings and love in the Risen Lord,

† Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia