

The Easter Vigil Teachings
A Sermon presented for the Faithful
at Easter Vigil.

*Translated from Aramaic into English by Corbishop Dr. George Toma
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The delightful-joys of this awesome day, which causes me to tremble, prompts me to recite the word of The Prophet. ***“This is the day that the LORD has made; come let us rejoice and be happy in it.”*** This is the day which has never before seen one like unto it. And, neither after has been there a day like unto it! This is a Great Feast! The pride of all the feasts. This is a Great Joy which has been given to The Church; This Day.

Come in peace, The New Day, because the power of darkness has been loosened. Come in Peace, the Day, which does not appear like The One before; Friday. Because, the power of the old-night has been loosened. Come in peace, O, Bright Day! The Bright Day which carries The Glad Tidings. Come in peace, O, You Who gives Consolation to the lost; O, Rejoicer of the Bereaved; The Gatherer of the Scattered; The One who brings near those who are afar-off; The Rejoicer of the despondent ones; The One who gives comfort to those who grieve; The sower of good seed, in the hearing of the Disciples.

Come in peace, The Day which has no evening; and, The Joyful Morning in which the turning of the day will not make sad; Come in peace, The Day in which evening will not come; The Resurrection which does not encounter falling-down. Come in peace, The First Born of Days! Both worlds have been wreathed by Your gift. Death is humiliated, and Life IS exalted; Sheol is closed, Baptism is open. The left hand is empty; in the right-hand thundering. The day before yesterday, The Shepherd was smitten, and HIS lambs scattered; This Day, the wolves have fled; The Church rejoices. In the day other Judas was bribed, and Caiaphas took counsel and listening; Annas stood against; the Pharisees, confused and troubled; Andrew was fleeing; Simon was denying; John was far away; Thomas hid himself; James was amazed; all the Disciples are far away.

But, Today! Caiaphas is embarrassed! Annas is blamed; Judas hanged himself; the money was scorned; The Pharisees are silent; The heads of

synagogue cover their heads; The Levites blame one another; Pilate is amazed, the trouble-makers and soldiers disappear; the gathering of the wolves are scattered; The Shepherd spoke to HIS sheep; The Flock took HIS utterances and became warmed; Mary is rejoicing; Salome is happy; Magdalene is carrying the Gospel of Peace; The Disciples raised their heads; The Apostles went out from their hidden places; Simon and John are running to The Tomb; Matthew and Bartholomew Rejoice in their happiness; Andrew and James forgot their depression; Thomas is confessing; Pilate is glorifying; The Way of The Tomb is thundering and the way to Golgotha has been abandoned. The sadness has passed to the left; and the consolation is now risen on the right! The door of The Tomb has become The Throne where the martyrs sit.

Here let us all, shout aloud and say: “***Where your sting of death is; and, where your victory, O, Sheol is?***” This day, the guards of the tomb, were bribed and said: “***His Apostles, stole HIM while we were sleeping!***” Thereafter He was seen by Mary Magdalene and others. As the Apostles, with open face, say: “***We know Christ is risen from among the dead!***” He will never die again; and death has no power over HIM. But, unto this joy we have been summoned; and unto This Feast we have been invited; let us embrace and kiss one another in love; and give peace to one another; not the peace of betraying one another, not the peace of hypocrisy; peace not from a corrupt conscience; peace not like that of Judas Iscariot, whose reward was hanging himself.

The peace which our Savior sent upon the Apostles in the Upper-room; Peace be with all of you; because peace is the loosening of past enmity. We are called for peace, we are gathered to keep peace; as it is practiced each year; Let the Resurrection and The LIFE of Christ be blessed unto you; Our LORD has made us free from death; from mortality into immortality, From Adam’s descendants to Children of God; from the earthly to the Heavenly; the soulish to the spiritual; instead of discourse (argumentativeness), let us be quiet. From grievous vexation to being peacemakers; instead of being obnoxious behavior, be pleasantly gracious; instead of hard-heartedness, be merciful; instead of meddlesomeness be simplicity; instead prideful, be humble; instead of arrogance, be meek; instead of oppressiveness, be graceful; instead of being a prodigal, enter into fasting (and prayers); instead of drunkenness, be abstainers; instead of licentious be of pure behavior (or chaste); instead of laziness, be diligently active; instead of being sinful, be righteous; instead of evil-behavior be upright and just; instead of wickedness

be good; let us love one another from the depth of our heart, because unto this Peace we have been called; clap your hands, and glorify with excellency; exalt in a Lordly manor, and with spiritual praises unto The ONE who this day has risen from the dead! And in HIS resurrection we have all been resurrected: Amen.

He resurrected the thief, the son of our nature; ***“this day you will be with ME in Paradise,”*** may HE make us worthy to receive HIS heavenly revelation; and, to participate in HIS heavenly Kingdom: Amen

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