CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Today, we share a joy, a joy of wonder, a joy that comes from within, because indeed, Christ is Risen! Today, we share the same joy of the disciples to whom Mary Magdalene brought the good news that Jesus Christ is Risen, and she has seen Him! This joy of the Resurrection starts from a personal encounter with the Risen Christ. What did it take for Mary Magdalene’s tears to give way to Easter joy? Nothing less than meeting the risen Christ! And so, the Easter Gospel is not only about life from death, but also about this encounter Mary Magdalene has with the Lord. Jesus meets us – calls our name, opens our eyes, and invites us to see. He wants us to experience the joy of encountering Him and living for Him and not for ourselves. If we do this, we will experience the joy of being liberated from our sins which trap us in self-centeredness. No matter what may be happening in our lives, we can still experience spiritual joy through the love of God and living the way God made us to live, which is to live for others and for Him.

We fully understand that many families are going through very difficult times right now. Some parishioners are dealing with serious illness in their home. Almost everyone knows someone who is sick or is vulnerable to getting sick. There is also the worry, as the crisis lasts, of financial problems in each household as the economy suffers. We want you to know that we are with you in the Good Lord’s spirit and will be with you through this crisis that the entire world is experiencing now.

In a very similar way, our Parish is sharing that same hardship. With the extension of the social distance guidelines until the end of the month, our Parish will have gone through 7 weeks without a public Divine Liturgy, and without our weekly offertory collection, which is the largest source of support for the Parish. Typically, these 7 weeks provide about 1/3 of the Parish’s annual income. It would be hard for most households to suffer such a loss. Our Parish is no different. We respectfully ask you to please support our Parish during this dire time of need by sending your weekly Sunday donation to our Parish by mail (PO Box 3116 La Mesa CA 91941), direct deposit, or using the PayPal link under the contributions tab on our website ([www.stjohnthebaptizer.org](http://www.stjohnthebaptizer.org)) on a weekly basis.

We will get through this crisis together and come out on the other side but, please remember that our Parish must sustain its operational costs to the extent possible now. And of course, we fully understand and pray for you that if your personal financial situation prevents you from contributing at your normal level or at all. For those who might be able, we request that you please do what you can for now to help our Parish overcome this crisis.

God willing, an announcement will be made soon when we can publicly celebrate the Divine Liturgy again. We look forward to that day, and to welcoming you back into our beloved Church. It will be a joyous day for everyone, and we will all appreciate seeing each other more than ever as we sit in the Church and give thanks again for Jesus Christ’s gift of the Church to us!

Our fervent prayer is that our Resurrected and Living Lord may bestow his peace and grace upon you, your Family,

and your loved ones as well as upon our community, our nation and the world! May God bless you and your Family and may His Mother Mary keep you beneath the Mantle of Her Mercy!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Yurii Sas