

## **HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA IN JERUSALEM**

by the Monk Parthenius

*Note: Christ is Risen!*

*The following text was originally translated by Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Boston and printed in "Orthodox Life."*

*It is excellent reading for all during the Paschal season.*

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For the Christians the greatest feast days and festival were approaching. The time of joy and sorrow was approaching. We rejoiced because of this, that we would receive the new grace of the heavenly Fire, and celebrate the most radiant festival of Holy Pascha in the Holy City of Jerusalem. Yet we grieved in heart that the time was coming for everyone to part. We had lived six months together and had come to know one another. But most of all we feared those bitter moments when we should have to leave the holy city of Jerusalem, the holy and life-bearing Sepulchre of Christ and the other holy places. We came to our rooms, we ate dinner, rested and then went to spend the night in the Church of the Resurrection. Matins on Thursday was solemn; the early Liturgy was performed on the Grave of Christ; a bishop acted as proto-celebrant and there were many communicants at the Liturgy.

The late Liturgy was in the Patriarchate; the Patriarch himself served. The washing of the feet was in the court opposite the holy gates of the Church of the Resurrection. There was a platform made three steps high; around it were railings and on the railings columns rested. There were large candles on the columns. The platform was spread with carpets. In the center there stood a gold-plated table, and along the sides twelve chairs. On the wall towards the east they hung icons and before them candles were burning; by this wall a throne was erected for the reading of the Gospels. A hundred soldiers came and stood around the throne. In the court, at St. Abraham's Monastery, at the Gethsemane metochion, in the patriarchal monastery, and in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre there were great multitudes of people. We stood in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We saw the Patriarch coming out of the Patriarchal monastery in all his vestments, accompanied by the bishops and twelve priests. In front of them went twelve boys in servers' vestments with candlesticks and candles; then the chanters; then deacons with censers. Then came the priests and seven deacons with the dikiri and trikiri. Behind them came the Patriarch who was blessing the people with both hands; behind him, the bishops in rassas. Having mounted the platform, the Patriarch sat in his place and ordered the other priests to sit according to rank. The bishops stood by and watched. The order of the washing of the feet began according to the typicon, and the archimandrite read the Gospel from the throne.

Before evening the blessing of oil was performed in all the monasteries, and everywhere the bishops themselves anointed all the pilgrims with the oil. That evening the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was not opened and they allowed no one to spend the night there. But a Russian noblewoman petitioned the Patriarch and the consul to conduct the vigil on Golgotha half in Russian. The Patriarch respected their request and when it was already late in the evening, they opened the holy gates and allowed only the Russians into the church. Compline was read on Golgotha and they chanted the whole canon to the Cross in Greek. Then the Greeks went to sleep, and we Russians went to the cave where the Empress Helen found the Cross. There we read the twelve Gospels of the Passion and the synaxarion and other things appropriate for that day, and we chanted the Akathist to the venerable Cross.

When they began beating the semantron for Matins, we all went to Golgotha, and Matins was served according to the typicon. They read the Gospels -- six in Greek and six in Russian. The antiphons and canons were chanted by the right choir in Greek and the left in Russian; and the service lasted six hours. The Royal Hours were all read and chanted on Golgotha in Russian. In the morning the doors to the church were not opened and there was silence in the church. At the twelfth hour of the day two deacons were sent to each holy place to cense it. First two Orthodox deacons censed. Then two Armenian deacons wearing mitres censed. Then two Coptic deacons went also, wearing mitres. The Latins did not cense. Their deacons wear clothing different from all other religions. Then everyone had processions. At one o'clock in the afternoon, they opened the holy great gates of the church. The people rushed into the church, and there was a great din in the church. Everyone rushed to get a place. We were already occupying our places. In a minute the whole church was filled with people.

Half an hour later, suddenly, near the Grave of Christ there was a noise and the Arabs started shouting in their strange tongue; about fifty men joined hands and stood on one another's shoulders three-high and raised their hands to heaven and all began shouting. They began to run around the Sepulchre of Christ and then around the whole church: they ran and shouted until the evening. Then a thousand men of the Turkish military came and made a guard near the holy gates, and placed watchmen about the whole church. The Patriarch then came with much glory, and he was met majestically. Vespers was solemn; but they did not take the epitaphios from Golgotha because of the possibility of disorder. After Vespers the Arabs again took to their "work" and again began to run around and shout. I asked those who understood Russian, "What are they saying?" They told me that they were praising the one Orthodox faith, but were reviling the other confessions as being false and soul-destroying. They came to the Armenians and reviled them, saying that they themselves had wanted to receive the

grace, but instead of that had eaten defilement.

Let me tell you about this: At the Great Gates themselves, on the left side, stands a column made out of marble with a fissure from which the grace, that is, the Holy Fire, came forth. This column is honored by Orthodox as well as non-Orthodox, and even the Armenians. I would like to write a little about this incident, how the Orthodox Eastern Christians unanimously speak of it and the Turks themselves confirm it. In the wall there is an inscribed marble slab, and they say that this very incident is written on it; but we could not read it because it is written in Syrian letters, in the Arab tongue; and I only heard about it, but did not read it. But the incident happened something like this: At one time when the Greeks were completely oppressed by the Turkish yoke, some rich Armenians took it into their heads to force the Greeks out of the Holy Sepulchre and out of the Church of the Resurrection. They gathered a large sum of money and bribed the Ottoman Porte and all the Jerusalem authorities, assuring the unbelievers that the Holy Fire comes forth not simply for the sake of the Greeks, but for all Christians, and "if we Armenians are there, we also will receive it!" And the Turks, who are greedy for money, accepted the bribe and therefore did as the Armenians wished, and they affirmed that only the Armenians would be allowed to receive the Holy Fire. The Armenians rejoiced greatly and wrote to all their lands and to their faithful, that more of them should go on a pilgrimage. And a great multitude of them did come. Holy Saturday approached: the Armenians all gathered in the church, and the Turkish army drove the poor Greeks out. Oh, what unspeakable grief and sorrow filled the Greeks! There was only one comfort for them -- the Grave of the Saviour, and they were being kept away from it, and the Holy Gates were locked to them! The Armenians were inside the church and the Orthodox were on the streets. The Armenians were rejoicing and the Greeks were weeping. The Armenians were celebrating and the Greeks were bitterly lamenting! The Orthodox stood opposite the Holy Gates on the court and around them stood the Turkish army, watching so that there would not be a fight. The Patriarch himself with all the rest stood there with candles, hoping that they would at least receive the Fire from the Armenians through the window. But the Lord wished to dispose things in a different way, and to manifest His true Faith with a fiery finger and comfort His true servants, the humble Greeks. The time had already come when the Holy Fire issues forth, but nothing happened. The Armenians were frightened and began to weep, and ask God that He send them the Fire; but the Lord did not hear them. Already a half hour had passed and more, and still no Holy Fire. The day was clear and beautiful; the Patriarch sat to the right side. All of a sudden there was a clap of thunder, and on the left side the middle marble column cracked and out of the fissure a flame of fire came forth. The Patriarch arose and lit his candles and all the Orthodox Christians lit theirs from his. Then all rejoiced, and the Orthodox Arabs from Jordan began to skip and cry out, "Thou art our one God, Jesus Christ; one is our

True Faith, that of the Orthodox Christians!" And they began to run about all of Jerusalem and raise a din, and to shout all over the city. And to this day they still do this in memory of the incident and they jump and shout, running around the Holy Sepulchre, and they praise the one true God, Jesus Christ, and bless the Orthodox Faith. Beholding this wonder, the Turkish army, which was standing around on guard, was greatly amazed and terrified. From amongst them one named Omir, who was standing at the St. Abraham's Monastery on guard, immediately believed in Christ and shouted, "One is the true God, Jesus Christ; one is the true faith, that of the Orthodox Christians!" And he jumped down to the Christians from a height of more than 35 feet. His feet landed on the solid marble as if though on soft wax. And to this day one can see his footprints imprinted as though in wax, although the non-Orthodox tried to erase them. I saw them with my own eyes and felt them with my own hands. And the column with the fissure still bears the scorch marks. As for Omir the soldier, having jumped down, he took his weapon and thrust it into the stone as though into soft wax, and began to glorify Christ unceasingly. For this, the Turks beheaded him and burned his body; the Greeks gathered up his bones, put them into a case and took them to the Convent of the Great Panagia, where they gush forth fragrance until this day. The Armenians in the Holy Sepulchre received nothing and were left only with their shame. The Pasha of Jerusalem and other Turkish authorities were greatly displeased with them and wanted to slaughter them all, but they feared the Sultan. They only punished them heavily: they say that they made each one to eat dung as he left the church.

But now to return to the services in the Church of the Resurrection. Having reviled the Armenians, the Arabs reviled the Latins, saying that they do not believe in grace, and do not receive the Holy Fire from the Grave of the Lord, but they start their own fire. And we saw their ungodliness from what had happened the week before. On the sixth Sunday of the Fast we prepared for communion. On the eve of Lazarus Saturday we went to spend the night in the church at the Holy Sepulchre in order to receive the Holy Mysteries. In the evening they read Compline on Golgotha; then we wanted to read the rule of preparation for Holy Communion. But the Latins had begun a procession: for them it was Holy Saturday, and they were going to Golgotha with their cross. We wanted to wait until they passed by; but our Orthodox people, Russians and Greeks, were also standing on Golgotha to watch their procession and rites. There were very few of us; there were no more than fifty Greeks, counting the chanters. But there were more than five hundred Latins, and they also had with them about fifty soldiers. When they came to Golgotha, the Latins first chanted and read at their own place; then they went over to our place, where the Cross of Christ had stood. Our monks took down all the lamps which could possibly interfere with them and carried away the candlestands, and thus cleared the area. There remained only a covering on the Holy Table. The Latins set up their cross behind our Holy Table and said that we should take the covering off the Holy Table. The

Greeks refused, saying, "We cannot do this, for the covering is never taken off, and the firman does not allow it; but you spread your own cloth on top"; when the Latins tried to take the covering off by force, the Greeks did not let them. Then the Latin archbishop came and scandalously grabbed the covering off the Holy Table. There were two consuls standing by: a Russian and a Greek. Immediately the Greeks made an uproar and dashed out into the corridor and brought many pieces of wood from the kitchen, and a fight began on Golgotha. The Greeks were beating them with pieces of wood, and the Latins hitting back with candles, but afterwards they also brought pieces of wood. The Turks rushed in to break it up, but their guns had been taken away; and they ran to save the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of the Resurrection, for at that time, since it was towards Palm Sunday, everything was ornamented with silver and gold. We did not know where to run and we froze from fear. The Russian consul was saving his own people and conducting them to the trapeza. We, about twenty of us, went to the Church of the Resurrection and from fear did not know where to go, whether into the altar or even under the Holy Table! Noise, shouting, cries rose to heaven, especially on Golgotha. All the Christians were sounding alarms -- the Orthodox on all the semantra, but also the Armenians, Latins, and Copts. The soldiers were standing around the Holy Sepulchre, hand to hand, with their weapons too, and so that there would not be any theft, they stood by the gates of the Church of the Resurrection. The fight had spread all over the church. They threw the Latin Patriarch down from Golgotha; it was good that he fell on the people, or else he would have been killed. Metropolitan Meletius began admonishing them to stop the fight, but they said to him, "You stand in your own place, Vladyka, but we will die for our faith here; for there are few of us and many heretics." Unable to do anything the bishop sat down with the Turks. The fight continued for more than an hour, until the Turkish army and the Pasha himself came. Then they separated them one by one and locked them up in the guest houses. We, the few Russians, went away to the Church of the Mother of God. The soldiers wanted to take us and shut us up also, but we said that we were Muscovites and they left us alone. Then for an hour they had a council: the Archbishop, the Pasha, and the consul were discussing the matter. At that time I was able to read the rule for preparation for Holy Communion. After the meeting the Pasha, Archbishop, and consuls each went home. The Latins began their procession again, and finished on the Grave of Christ; then the soldiers drove them all out and they went away themselves. They locked the gates of the church and sent everyone away. And again they began beating the semantra for Matins.

We had Matins in the Church of the Resurrection and had Liturgy on the Grave of Christ, and I was deemed worthy to be a partaker of the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ. But Mount Golgotha was all covered with blood; and during the whole of Matins two men were washing it with water. Three people were killed. I have not seen such terror since the

day I was born.

Again let us return to the Holy Week services. The non- Orthodox gave money to the soldiers so that they would beat the Arabs who were reviling everyone else's faith and drive them away. For that reason the Arabs were all in a blood and sweat. They took their long shirts from their shoulders and would walk about half-naked. If someone would beat them, they would not worry, but would continue their task. When they ran around the Grave of Christ and the Church of the Resurrection they kept saying just one thing, and we found out that this is what they were saying: "One is God, Jesus Christ! One is the faith of the Orthodox Christians!" Then the Christians of all confessions carried the epitaphios: the Armenians, Copts, and Syrians. First they went to Golgotha, then to the taking down from the Cross, and then three times around the Grave of Christ and then went away to their own sections. Thus we spent the night until dawn amidst unceasing noise. In the church it was like a bazaar or a fair. Till now the pilgrims were scattered out all over Jerusalem; and now all Christians from different countries were gathered in the one church, at the Sepulchre of their Saviour, Jesus Christ. The balconies and all the galleries were filled with people. All were asking, all were pleading in their different ways. Crowds everywhere, and fights everywhere because of the crowdedness. No one understood the other's language and Turkish soldiers were ceaselessly dispersing the people. You could say that the church, like Heaven itself, was gathering in itself the whole world. Thus we spent the night until dawn.

Then they began to beat the wood for Matins and the Arabs stopped making noise. The Patriarch began Matins and they passed out candles to all the Orthodox. They chanted the whole Kathisma "Blessed are blameless" in the Church of the Resurrection. They went to Golgotha to read the Gospel. Having read the Gospel they lifted the epitaphios and carried it from Golgotha with banners and lanterns. There was a great gathering of clergy: besides the deacons, priests, abbots, and archimandrites, there were six bishops and the Patriarch, and a host of chanters. When they had carried the epitaphios from Golgotha, they went around three times -- for the taking down from the Cross. Then they laid it on the place where Jesus Christ was wrapped in linen and anointed with myrrh for burial. Here a long sermon was given. Then they carried the epitaphios to the Grave of Jesus Christ, and carried it around the Sepulchre three times. They carried it into the Sepulchre and placed the epitaphios on the Tomb itself. The clergy stood around the shrine of Christ's Sepulchre. Only the clergy chanted the whole canon ("Kimati thalasses") and the verses. The people held candles in their hands. There they also chanted the Praises and the Great Doxology, and read the Gospel. And there, they finished Matins and the Hours. After this they took the epitaphios to its place and the Turks sealed the Sepulchre.

After the service the Arabs took up their task again, but they had multiplied now, because the people of Jerusalem, merchants and old people, took off their turbans, took each other by the hand, and began to shout and skip. When dawn came, they began to put out the fires and lamps and nowhere was a lamp left burning. The Turks opened Christ's Sepulchre and put out all the lamps. Then the Turkish authorities and the Pasha himself came; and host of armed soldiers stood around Christ's Sepulchre. In the church everything had changed; everyone had become melancholy and the Arabs had become hoarse and weak. The church was unusually crowded and stuffy. Above, all the balconies were crammed with people in four rows. All the iconostasia and the domes were full of people. All were holding thirty-three candles in both hands in remembrance of the years of Christ's life. There was nothing lit anywhere.

The Patriarch went up to the main iconostasis with the consul. Meletius, the Metropolitan of Trans-Jordan, sat in the altar with the rest of the bishops, all melancholy and hanging their heads. In the church the Moslems with their weapons of war were giving orders; the Arabs had already stopped running about, but stood lifting their hands to heaven and uttering compunctionate cries; the Christians were all weeping or continually sighing. And who at that time could withhold his tears, beholding such a multitude of people from all countries of the world weeping and wailing and asking mercy from the Lord God? It was joyous to see that now, although unwillingly, the rest of the Christians were showing some respect for the Orthodox Greek Faith and for the Orthodox themselves, and that they were looking upon the Orthodox as though upon the brightest of suns, because everyone was hoping to receive the grace of the Holy Fire from the Orthodox. The Armenian patriarch went to the altar with two bishops and the Coptic metropolitan, and they bowed to Metropolitan Meletius and the rest of the bishops and asked that when we receive the grace of the Holy Fire, that we grant it to them also. Metropolitan Meletius answered with humility and told them to pray to God. They went to their own places. Then the royal gates were taken off and were replaced with others with a special opening.

It is not possible to describe what was then happening in the church. It was as though all were waiting for the Second Coming of the King of Heaven. Fear and terror fell upon all, and the Turks became despondent. And in the church there was nothing to be heard except sighing and groans. And Metropolitan Meletius' face was wet with tears. Then the Turkish Pasha came with the other authorities, and they went into Christ's Sepulchre to make sure that nothing remained alight there. When they came out they sealed the Sepulchre, but previously they had placed a large lamp inside, filled to the very brim with oil. In it floated a large wick. They put the lamp in the middle of the Tomb of Christ. Now there were no Christians near the shrine, but only the Turkish authorities. And from the balconies they let

down on ropes hundreds of wires with bunches of candles attached.

At eight o'clock according to Russian time (two in the afternoon), they began preparing for the procession with the Cross. The bishops, priests, and deacons, having dressed in all their sacred vestments, each took thirty-three unlit candles. Then from the altar, through the royal doors, were handed twelve banners, and whoever could took them. The soldiers cleared the way, and the chanters went behind the banners. From the altar through the royal doors came the deacons, priests, abbots and archimandrites, two by two, then the bishops, and behind all of them, Metropolitan Meletius. They went to the Lord's Sepulchre, and went around it three times chanting, "Angels in the heavens, O Christ our Saviour, praise Thy Resurrection with hymns; deem us also who are on earth worthy to glorify Thee with a pure heart."

Having finished the procession, all the clergy went quickly into the altar with the banners. Metropolitan Meletius stayed alone at the entrance of the Sepulchre in the hands of the Turks. The Turks divested him, and the authorities searched him. Then they put the omophorion on him, opened the Sepulchre of Christ, and let him go inside. Oh, what fear and terror fell upon all them that were there at the time! All were silent and moaning and asking the Lord God that He not deprive them of the grace of His heavenly Fire. Some time passed, I do not know how long, for we were all beside ourselves from a kind of fear. But all of a sudden from near Christ's Sepulchre there shined a light. Soon light also appeared from the altar in the royal doors in the opening. And it flowed like two rivers of fire, one from the west, from Christ's Sepulchre, and another from the east, from the altar. Oh, what joy and exultation there was in the church then! Everyone became as though drunk or besides himself, and we did not know who was saying what, or who was running where! And a great noise rose in all of the church. All were running around, all were crying out in joy and thanksgiving -- most of all the Arab women. The Turks themselves, the Moslems, fell on their knees and cried, "Allah, Allah," that is, "O God, O God!" Oh, what a strange and most wonderful sight! The whole church was transformed into fire. Nothing could be seen in the church besides the heavenly Fire. Above and below, and round all the balconies the Holy Fire was being poured forth. And afterwards there was smoke about the whole church. And a good half of the people went out with the Fire and carried it about Jerusalem to their own homes and to all the monasteries.

In the Great Church Vespers began, and then the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great. The Metropolitan served with the priests, and he ordained a deacon. The people stood through the Liturgy with candles. When the Metropolitan of Trans-Jordan goes into the Sepulchre, he finds a large lamp standing on the Grave of Christ which has been lit by itself; sometimes it lights itself unexpectedly while he is there. However, he himself has never seen



it light. In Jerusalem, I heard from many people with whom the Metropolitan himself had spoken about it openly: "Sometimes I go in and it is already burning; then I take it out quickly. But sometimes I go in and the lamp is not yet burning; then I fall down to the ground from fear and begin with tears to beg mercy from God. When I get up the lamp is already burning and I light two bunches of candles and I carry them out and distribute them." The Metropolitan carries the fire out into the vestibule and puts the bunches of the candles into iron holders and gives them out from the Sepulchre through openings made for that purpose, with the right hand to the Orthodox and the left hand to the Armenians and the rest. The Orthodox Arabs stand in a crowd near the opening. As soon as the Metropolitan shows the Holy Fire, one Arab, laying hold of it, runs straight to the altar and there through the royal doors it is distributed to the people; but one is hardly able to light his candles in the openings. Then the Metropolitan again returns to Christ's Sepulchre and lights another two bunches and goes out of the door of the Sepulchre. The strongest Arabs stand at the doors of the Sepulchre and await him. As soon as he goes out holding in his hands the thirty-three burning candles, the Arabs, taking him in their hands, carry him directly to the altar. All the people rush toward him. They all desire to touch his clothing. And with great difficulty, they are barely able to carry him into the altar. They sat him on a chair, and he sat through the whole Liturgy as though beside himself, with his head bowed; he did not look up and did not say a word; and no one disturbed him. As soon as they carried him out of the Sepulchre, the people rushed in to venerate it. And I was deemed worthy to do the same. The whole of Christ's Sepulchre was wet, as though dampened by rain; but I could not find out what it was from. In the middle of the Grave stood the large lamp which lit itself and a great flame was burning.

After the Liturgy each person went to his place, and all congratulated each other on the reception of the grace of the Holy Fire.

In the evening we all went to spend the night in the church at Christ's Sepulchre. And when we came to the church we beheld a wondrous and most glorious sight: the whole church, especially the Sepulchre, was wondrously decorated with various silver and gold icons and figures, and above a multitude of silver and gold-plated lamps, burning with a great brilliance. A host of candles made of white wax were set in place, but not yet burning. The whole church was hung with lamps; where there was previously one lamp, now there were ten; I wanted to count them, but I could not. Everywhere it was quiet and peaceful. The doors of the church remained unlocked the whole night through. The soldiers in the court started a fire. And that night was happiest of all: no matter where you went, you would find joy everywhere. And not only was this joy in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but all over Jerusalem. The whole night people were walking along the streets in crowds; everywhere they were burning fires, and all the monasteries were open. The

Turks themselves became happy and meek, and went in crowds to look at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Only the Jews locked themselves in their homes, and not bearing to behold the light of truth, they stayed moldering in their evil. The Latins, however, although they are the enemies of the Eastern Church, celebrated with us. Although soldiers stood in the church around the Sepulchre of Christ, they did not prevent anyone from approaching the Sepulchre. Thus we spent the evening until ten o'clock. Then at the third hour before midnight they began to call us to Matins on various semantra, and with various rhythms all in a most solemn manner. The Patriarch came with his whole assembly, and there was a most ceremonial meeting for him.

Then they began Matins. They chanted the canon "The waves of the sea" completely, verse by verse, antiphonally, with the heirmos and fourteen troparia. They chanted two hours. At that time they lit the candles and oil lamps around the whole church; in the domes themselves more than a thousand lamps were lit. We monastics all stood in the altar. Then the Patriarch and the metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, archimandrites, abbots, priests and deacons and all the church clergy, having put on all their sacred vestments, took twelve banners. The banners were richly adorned; they had been presented by ancient Greek and Georgian kings. They were sewn with gold and pearls. They bring them out only on Pascha. Behind the Patriarch they carried a banner which took three men to hold; it was sewn only with gold, and was an image of the Resurrection of Christ of Russian workmanship offered by Muscovite merchants. Then they gave everyone large candles of white wax. They also lit candles and oil lamps around the whole church. The Sepulchre seemed as though it were one fiery lamp. From the large candles in the hands of each person the whole church became as though on fire and the domes of the church shone like the sun. Those that were in the procession of the Cross took the Gospels, icons, crosses, and the candles and went from the altar of the Church of the Resurrection through the royal gates directly to Christ's Sepulchre, chanting, "Angels in the Heavens, O Christ our Saviour, praise Thy Resurrection with hymns; deem us also who are on earth worthy to glorify Thee with a pure heart." When they had gone in procession around the Sepulchre three times, the whole concourse of clergy stopped opposite the doors of the Sepulchre. Then the Patriarch himself read the Gospel of the Resurrection from Matthew which is read in the evening on Saturday in the Liturgy. Then he took the censer inside, and censured the Grave of Christ. When he came out he censured around the whole shrine and all the brethren. Then with all the bishops he went into the Sepulchre of Christ, and there, having censured, he exclaimed, "Glory to holy and consubstantial and indivisible Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages." The bishops exclaimed, "Amen." Then the Patriarch himself with all the bishops, from within the Sepulchre itself, chanted, "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those

in the graves hath He bestowed life." And they chanted this three times. They did not chant in Russian, but only in Greek, that is, "Christos anesti ek nekron, thanato thanaton patisas, kai tis en tis mnemasi zoen charisamenos." Then the chanters chanted and all those standing around the Sepulchre of Christ chanted it many times.

O what joy there was then, and who would not weep for joy, beholding the Grave of their Saviour Jesus Christ before their own eyes, standing empty, for He has risen from the dead! Who could not thank their Creator Who had deemed them worthy to celebrate Holy Pascha, His glorious Resurrection from the dead, in the Holy City of Jerusalem, around His very Grave and on that very spot where the mystery of our salvation was accomplished? What pen can describe our joy? Or who could explain it in words? Which tongue could tell of it? Only he can understand it who tastes of this joy in the purity of his heart. How is it possible not to rejoice or to be happy? We had gathered from the four corners of the earth, Christians of different tongues, all gathered in one church. We all stood around the Grave of our Saviour and were glorifying His glorious Resurrection from the dead. In truth, all things were now filled with light; then the canon of Pascha became for us real and clear. For that which we were chanting, we were seeing with our own eyes. And with what feelings did we exclaim to Sion on which we were standing: "Lift up thine eyes about thee, O Sion, and see, for behold, from the west, from the north, and from the sea and from the south as to a light by God illumined, have thy children come to thee, blessing Christ forevermore" (8th Ode, 2nd Trop.). Truly for us, holy and worthy of all solemn triumph is this redeeming and radiantly effulgent night, the harbinger of the bright- beaming Day of the Resurrection on which Light eternal shone forth in the flesh from the grave for all.

There was a litany. When they began to chant the canon, they went into the great church; and on the Grave of Christ one priest with a deacon began early Liturgy. In the great church they chanted the whole canon. After Matins, without stopping, they began the Liturgy also. The Patriarch served with all the clergy in a most majestic and solemn manner. They read the epistle in three languages: Greek, Slavonic, and Arabic. The Gospel was read in many various languages: In Slavonic, they read three, and the rest in Helleno-Greek and Greek, Latin, Turkish, Georgian, Syrian, Arabic, Egyptian, and Abbyssinian, and they read while beating the semantron. Everyone stood through the Liturgy with candles. We stood through and Matins and Liturgy in the altar.

When Liturgy was finished, it had begun to dawn. The Orthodox went to the Patriarchate, and there at the gates they gave to each person two red eggs; then everyone went to their place.

By the way it was made known to all Orthodox pilgrims that at the first

hour in the afternoon they were to go to the Patriarchal Church for Vespers. And so we went into the Patriarchal Church. It was adorned and decorated with a multitude of lamps and candles. They gave into each person's hand a large candle made of white wax and we stood through the whole Vespers with candles. It was most solemn. For the entrance there came more than a hundred priests and a multitude of deacons. In front there were seven deacons with candles. Behind them they carried twelve fans. They went behind all the pillars. They read the Gospel like they did at the Liturgy, in many languages with the ringing of the bells. After Vespers there was food for the pilgrims. And then they opened the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the pilgrims went to venerate the Tomb. There -- a mournful sight: everyone was weeping, all were wailing. Everyone was embracing the Grave of their Saviour Jesus Christ, were wetting it with warm tears, because the time had come to part with it and to leave it forever. There was weeping and wailing all over the whole church; and especially the women were emitting loud sounds and wailing. And on all the holy places the people were lying and did not want to get up. Thus it was sad and grievous to part with Jerusalem and to be parted from the life-bearing Tomb of Christ.

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*The monk Parthenius (Ageev) was born in 1807 of Old-Ritualist parents in Jassy, Moldavia, and named Peter at Baptism. He was a child inclined to reading, especially the spiritual books which his parents had in their home. His soul was so influenced by these that at age 13 he ran away to a nearby monastery, only to be brought back by his parents after three months. As a young man he left Moldavia in search of an Old-Ritualist monastery where he could give himself over to Christ in the spiritual life. Disillusioned by the divisions between the various Old-Ritualist groups, he visited the Russian Orthodox monastery of Sarov, where he met the future Saint Seraphim. After returning to Moldavia and spending time in two Old-Ritualist monasteries, he was received into the Russian Orthodox Church at the age of 30. He then went to Mount Athos and entered the Monastery of St. Panteleimon. After being mistakenly arrested and spending fourteen months in Siberia (during the persecution of the Old Believers, while the abbot of St. Panteleimon's was away, Fr. Parthenius was mistaken for an Old-Ritualist priest in disguise), he returned to Mount Athos. He was counselled by his starets, the blessed Arsenius, to return to Russia as a missionary among the Old Believers. He spent seven years with the saintly Bishop Athanasius in Tomsk, Siberia, being made igumen of Berlukov, and was then commissioned by the Holy Synod to found Guslitsy Monastery. He fell asleep in the Lord in 1878 in the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, where he had retired, and was buried there.*

*Of Father Parthenius' numerous writings, the most widely-read is his five volume work Report of the Wanderings and Journeys across Russia, Moldavia,*

*Turkey, and the Holy Land, in which are described his diverse experiences, and acquaintances with many notable personalities. Four volumes were published in Moscow in 1855, the fifth being published posthumously by Archimandrite Nikon, after appearing in serialized form in the review "Soul- Profiting Reading" between 1989-1901. Fr. Parthenius journeyed to the Holy Land in 1845, shortly before the death of his beloved elder. The following account of Holy Week and Paschal services in Jerusalem and of the miracle of the Holy Fire in 1846 is taken from the second volume of his Wanderings.*