

brilliantly” , the troparion of the resurrectional canon tells us. Without this purification, the only thing we will achieve is to light our lantern folklorically. We will not manage to get “Light from the unsetting Light” and to see the resurrected Christ “shining brilliantly”. And then- o woe!- the ascertainment of the Evangelist John will be verified: “the world did not know him and his own did not receive him”.

Such a mortal danger a certain Michael passed in Smyrna, who on the first Saturday of the Fast of 1772, with a deceptive hope of seeing “light” in slavery, denied Christ and became a Muslim. When however Pascha arrived and he heard the Christians chanting the “Christ is Risen”, he realized that he had sunk into thick darkness. He was nostalgic for the Light of the Resurrection. And he began chanting the Paschal hymn of Light. Preaching his now immovable faith in beloved Christ, he was also granted with his martyrdom, to confess that “truly the Lord has risen”.

Archim. B. L.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 2018 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA.** *The Holy Apostles of the Seventy Herodion, Agabus, Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon, and Hermes, Rufus the Obedient of the Kiev Caves, Celestine, Pope of Rome, The Holy New Martyr John the Ship-Builder who was martyred in Kos.*

**tone of the week :**

**EOTHINON :** *Second*

**EPISTLE READING:** *Acts of Apostles 1:1-8*

**GOSPEL READING:** *John 1:1-17*

**NEXT SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2018 THOMAS SUNDAY** *Leonidas, Bishop of Athens, Crescens the Martyr , The 9 Monk-martyrs of Corinth, Michael the New Martyr of Smyrna, Padarn, Bishop and Founder of Llandabarn Fawr*

**EPISTLE READING:** *Acts of Apostles 5:12-20*

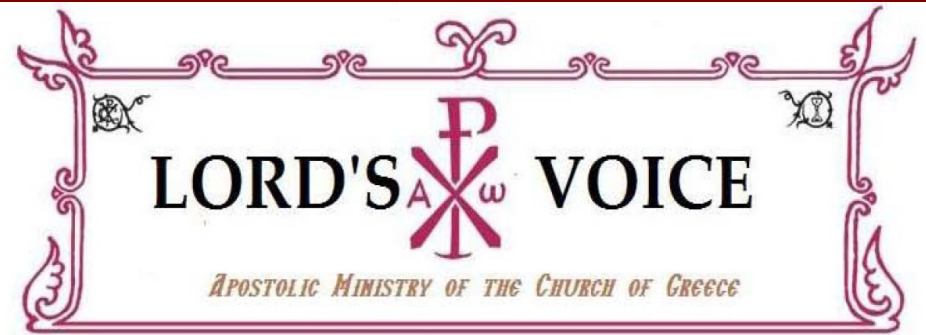
**GOSPEL READING:** *John 20:19-31*

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**66<sup>TH</sup> YEAR APRIL 8 2018 PAMPHLET #14 ( 3384 )**

## **CHRIST, OUR LIFE AND LIGHT**

Christ is Risen, brethren! A day of true light, today. “The universe is enlightened” with the bright-bearing resurrection of the Lord. “The lightning flash of the Godhead” of Christ dissolved the darkness of death. “The immortal life descended to death”. In the most tangible manner, we were assured that Christ is our life and life. Life that definitively defeated death, and light which no darkness can resist. “The darkness did not overcome it”. So for this reason today, in the most joyous Liturgy of the year, we also hear the most joyous Gospel.

### **Our creator and recreator**

“Christ is our life and light”. This is the summary of today’s gospel passage, which is the beginning of the Gospel of John. From the beginning the Evangelist says it clear cut: “in him”, in other words, in Christ, “was life, and the life was the light of men”. The Resurrection of our Christ showed us that these three words, “Christ”, “Life” and “Light”, are identical. These three realities are one. They are the resurrected Christ. And the most valid witness of this truth cannot but be other than the Evangelist John, the only disciple who followed Christ unto the end, and saw Him die on the cross. And his first disciple who-

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 1:1-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

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running quicker than Peter-found the tomb of Christ empty, and "saw the winding cloths" (the cloth strips).

Today the beloved disciple of our Lord assures us that the resurrected Christ is the Lord of glory. Is Yahweh of the Old Testament. Is the Son of God. His indescribable glory- "Glory as

only begotten of the Father"-John had also seen before his Resurrection, during his Transfiguration on Mount Tabor.

So this only begotten Son and Word of God is He who created us and the entire world. "Everything was made through him". And our creator, after He received human flesh and "dwelt among us" also became our recreator. He granted us-with his Passion and Resurrection-the ability not only to regain the "ancient beauty", but also obtaining the beauty incomparably higher: He made us His children and fellow inheritors of His Kingdom. Thus we are able to become partakers "of His fullness", since He shares the inexhaustible wealth of His gifts, giving us constantly "grace for grace".

The evangelist John, beginning his Gospel with this light-projecting outbreak of theology, is not able to not refer to the protomartyr of light, the Precious Forerunner. Saint John is truly the greatest of Prophets, because he was granted not only to see with his eyes the preached "light of light", Christ, but also to baptize him. He did not manage, of course, to see Him resurrected from the dead. But he was granted to assure with his martyrical death that Christ is our life and light. Thus with his preaching and death he "witnessed concerning the light", which defeats all the darknesses, and-above all-the darkness of death, in the end, giving a resounding witness about the light of the Resurrection of Christ.

### The purification of the senses

The Church invites us on the night of Resurrection to go get this resurrectional light. "Come ye, receive the Light!" she calls us on a journey, not forced, but voluntary, which naturally is not simply an external course from our house to the church. It is a little "farther" internal journey, which presupposes purification of the senses.

"Let us purify our senses and we shall see the unapproachable light of the Resurrection of Christ shining