

and his holy soul was severed from his immaculate body, yet his divinity remained inseparable from both, I mean, from his soul and his body."<sup>188</sup> The death of Christ is life-giving: Christ himself permitted death to hold him, so that he might finally conquer it, and grant new life.

230 By death on a cross, Christ descends into Hades, to the place of the dead. In Christ's descent into Hades, the Church hymns the power of the Resurrection: "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Cor 15:55). The icon of the descent of Christ into Hades portrays him in the bright garments of the new creation. The light-bearing Christ dispels the gloom of death, scatters the darkness of Hades in order to find Adam and Eve. Together with Adam, Christ brings forth out of the shadow of death those who awaited him, the righteous ones of the Old Testament.

231 The descent of Christ into Hades completes the salvation of the entire world, "heaven, earth, and the world beneath."<sup>189</sup> In his Incarnation, God descends from the heavenly to the earthly, and through death he further descends into the very depths of the underworld, to fill all things with himself. "You were bodily in the tomb, in Hades with your soul as God, in Paradise with the thief, and enthroned with the Father and the Spirit. O Christ, you fill all things but are contained by none."<sup>190</sup> By dying and descending into Hades, Christ the God-man reveals himself as the *Resurrection and the Life*: he awakens Adam from the sleep of sin and leads him into Paradise. Therefore, he "who apprehends the mystery of the cross and the burial apprehends the inward essences of created things; while he who is initiated into the inexpressible power of the Resurrection apprehends the purpose for which God first established everything."<sup>191</sup>

232 In the liturgical sticheras, the Church sings of the tomb of Christ, sealed and guarded by the soldiers, as a treasury into which was placed the true treasure—Christ. Christ, the *Sun of Righteousness*, went down into the tomb in order to come forth from it—to rise up. Just as Christ in the Incarnation came forth from the womb of Mary, so also in the Resurrection he came forth from the womb of the earth. He went down into the earth like Adam—*dust of the earth*; but he came forth from it, for as the incorruptible One to dust he returned not. "The tomb received\

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<sup>188</sup> JOHN OF DAMASCUS, *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, III, 27: PG 94, 1097.

<sup>189</sup> *Floral Triodion*, Sunday of Holy Pascha, Paschal Matins, Canon of Pascha, Ode 3.

<sup>190</sup> Liturgicon, The Divine Liturgy of our Holy Father John Chrysostom, Prayer at the Great Incensation.

<sup>191</sup> MSXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *On Theology and the Incarnation of the Son of God*, I, 66: PG 90, 1107.

him, but could not hold the Word captive." And so, the sign of death became the *fountain of Resurrection*. What was once death-bearing now becomes life-bearing. "As man he was laid in the sepulchre, and as God he destroyed Hades and set free the souls. As man he was sealed in the sepulchre, and as God he went forth, leaving the seals unbroken."<sup>192</sup>The empty tomb announces the Good News of the Resurrection: "Tell us, unbelievers, where is he whom you had placed in the grave and sealed with a stone? Gives us his body, O deniers of life. Give us the buried one or else believe in the Resurrection!"<sup>193</sup>

233 Angels announced to the myrrh-bearing women: "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen" (Lk 24:56). The Resurrection from the dead is the victory over bodily corruption: "Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him" (*Rom 6:9*). In the Resurrection, the body of Christ is new and glorified, free from earthly limitations of time and space. Precisely because of this, the Resurrection of Christ is the revelation of God's new creation. On Sunday, the first day after the Sabbath, the Church celebrates the Resurrection of Christ as the first day of the new creation.

234 The Resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of our own resurrection: "Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ" (1 Cor 15:20-22). The faith of the Church is entirely based on the Resurrection of Christ: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Cor 15:17-18). "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died" (1 Thes 4:14).

235 At the divine services of Great and Holy Friday, the Church venerates the Shroud (in Ukrainian, *plashchanytsia*) as a sign of Christ's death. The service of Jerusalem Matins (Matins of Holy Saturday) takes place before the Shroud. The hymnography mourns the One who has died in the hope of the coming Resurrection: "Weep not for me, O Mother ... for I shall rise." During the Paschal Midnight Office, the Shroud is transferred from the tomb of the Lord to the holy Altar. The faithful leave the church with lit candles and process three times around the church. Before the doors of the church, to the sound of the Paschal Tro-parion, "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to

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<sup>192</sup> ILARION, METROPOLITAN OF KYIV, *Sermon on Law and Grace*, 26.

<sup>193</sup> *Octoechos*, Tone 4, Sunday Matins, Stichera at the Praises.