



"ORTHODOX IX" PARISHES BULLETIN

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN CANADA

Monthly Newsletter for the family of *Orthodox IX* Churches including:



St. Mary's (the Nativity of the Holy Virgin) - NISKU

Sts. Peter & Paul - BONNYVILLE

Holy Ascension - CALMAR

Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY

St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE

St. John the Baptist - HOREN

St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)

Dormition of Theotokos - MACNUTT (SK)

Sts. Peter & Paul - INSINGER (SK)



Very Rev. Evgeniy Protsenko, Parish Priest

10812 - 108 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 3A6

Cell Phone: (780) 818-7343 Home Phone: (780) 426-5163

E-mail: pokrova70@gmail.com; web: <http://www.orthodox-canada.com>

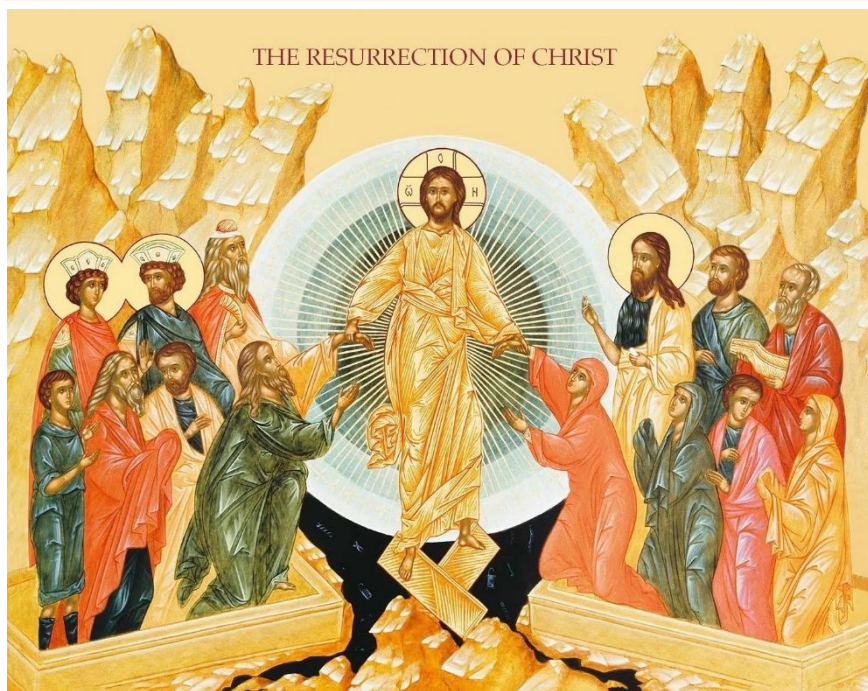


Volume 84, Issue 4

CHRIST IS RISEN!

April-May 2026

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST – April 12 - HOLY EASTER



The Resurrection of Christ is the most important Feast of our Christian faith and of our Christian life.

The world first learned of this Paschal joy from the words of the angel who appeared at the tomb of Christ to the myrrh-bearing women and said: *"Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; He is risen, as He said. Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead and is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him."* (Mat. 28:5-7)

The very essence of the Resurrection of Christ is in the victory of eternal life over death. *"O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"* (1 Cor. 15:55)

Today we celebrate the triumph of life over death, and the most significant historical fact!

The Apostle John the Theologian in his epistle also says: *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life — the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us."* (1 John 1:1-2)

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke writes that Christ *showed Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs.* (Acts 1:3)

The Apostle Paul says: *"Christ is indeed risen from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."* (1 Cor. 15:20)

And also, in the other epistle: *"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* (Rom. 6:4)

The Resurrection of Christ, however, is not meant to be just a concept or an idea we agree with – it must touch and transform both our mind and our heart.

(continued on the next page)

And this will only happen when a person walks the path of transfiguration – that is, when we do the commandments of Christ and take upon themselves the yoke of Christ, which is good and the source of grace, enlightening and sanctifying every person in this world!

Then we too shall be counted worthy – after Christ's second and dreadful coming – of the resurrection of the dead, and we shall be with our Christ forever and ever. Amen.

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

With heartfelt love in the Risen Christ our Lord, V. Rev. f. Yevheniy Protsenko and family

PASCHAL MESSAGE OF HIS GRACE MATTHEW, Bishop of Sourozh, interim Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA and Canada

Beloved in the Lord, all-honorable fathers, dear brothers and sisters!

CHRIST IS RISEN!

**With reverent joy in the Risen Saviour, I warmly greet you and
congratulate you on the the Feast of Feasts and Triumph of Triumphs —**

THE BRIGHT RESURRECTION OF CHRIST!



Today the fullness of the Church — heavenly and earthly — rejoices and glorifies the Lord, Who has shattered the power of death and granted to the world eternal life.

In the Resurrection of Christ is revealed the mystery of Divine love, by which "God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Having descended into the depths of Hades, the Lord Jesus Christ destroyed its bonds and led out those who had been awaiting deliverance, opening to humanity the path to incorruption and immortality. Therefore, the Holy Church proclaims with boldness: "O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55) — for the sufferings of the Saviour on the Cross were the beginning of victory, and His Resurrection the triumph of life, light, and truth.

The Pascha of Christ is the foundation of our faith and the source of our saving hope: in the words of the Apostle, "if we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him" (2 Tim. 2:11). In this lies the calling of every Christian — to die to sin and to rise to new life, being renewed in the spirit of the mind and growing in love and godliness.

The light of Christ's Resurrection ceaselessly illumines the Church and every believer, strengthening in faith, confirming in hope, and guiding toward works of mercy and righteousness. This light disperses the darkness of doubt and sorrow, granting peace and quiet spiritual joy to those who follow the Risen Lord with hope and trust.

In these holy and all-joyful days, I prayerfully wish for all of you that the light of Christ's Resurrection may shine upon you — strengthening your souls and bodies, confirming you in faith and love, and inspiring you to every good work.

May the grace of the Risen Christ abide with you all, granting strength of spirit, peace, and unspeakable joy in the Lord — for "your joy no one will take from you" (John 16:22).

INDEED CHRIST IS RISEN!

+ Matthew

Bishop of Sourozh
temporary Administrator of the Patriarchal
parishes in the USA and Canada
The Pascha of Christ, 2026, London

The Resurrection of Christ is the central event of all Sacred History. All four Evangelists bear witness to it (Matt. 28:6, Mark 16:6, Luke 24:6, John 20:6). Christ was crucified and died on the Cross for the sins of all people — those who had ever lived since the creation of the world and those who would ever live. The righteous Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus — secret disciples of Christ — took His body down from the Cross, laid it in a tomb hewn from rock, and, having sealed the entrance with a stone, departed, for the Sabbath — the feast of the Jewish Passover — was already beginning. Early in the morning on the day after the Sabbath, the women — disciples of the Saviour — came to the cave to anoint the body of Jesus with burial spices, according to tradition. They found that the heavy stone sealing the entrance had been rolled away, and that the tomb was empty: inside they found only the burial cloths and the cloth that had covered Christ's face. At the entrance to the cave, the myrrh-bearing women were met by an angel, who proclaimed to them that Christ is risen!

On the icon of the Resurrection, Christ raises from the abyss of Hades the first-created, Adam and Eve, and with them all the righteous of the Old Testament.

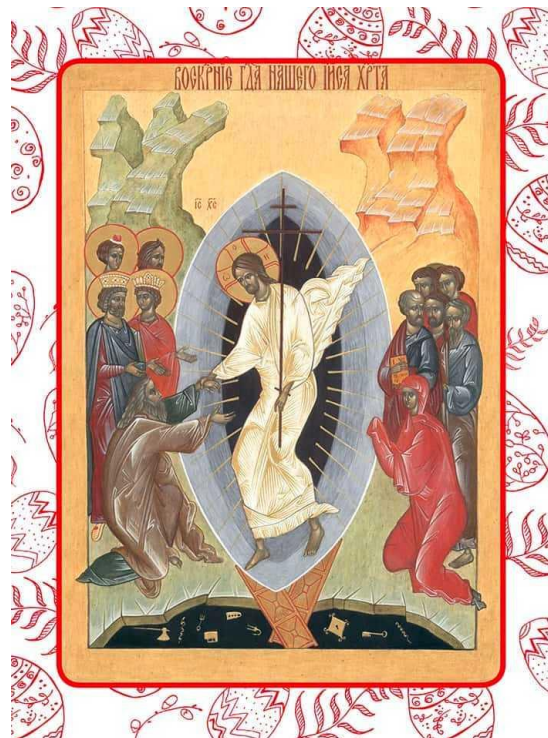
In His hand the Saviour holds the Cross — as a banner of victory, which has opened the gates of Hades for all who would follow Him.

The destruction of Hades is shown by the shattered gates and broken locks beneath Christ's feet. As is sung in the Paschal Canon of St. John of Damascus:

"Thou didst descend into the nethermost parts of the earth and didst shatter the eternal bars that held those who were fettered, O Christ; and on the third day, like Jonah from the whale, Thou didst rise from the tomb."

Death entered the world through the fall of the first-created. Adam and Eve transgressed the commandment given by the Creator and were cast out of Paradise. The disobedience of our forebears condemned all their descendants to death.

But humanity was not left without hope of return. God promised that death would be conquered. From that time forward, all the righteous lived in expectation of the coming of the Saviour into the world.



12 Facts About the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ

Pascha (from the ancient Hebrew *Pesach*, "Passover") is the feast instituted in memory of the deliverance of the Jewish firstborn from death on the day when the chosen people fled from Egyptian bondage. On that day, the Jews slaughtered and ate a lamb and smeared its blood on the doorposts of their homes. The Angel of the Lord, who struck down all the firstborn of Egypt, *passed over* their dwellings and left them unharmed.

The Paschal Lamb is a symbol of Christ. Just as the Jews, delivered from death by the blood of an innocent lamb, fled from a land that was fertile yet deadly to them, so Christians receive deliverance from death through the Blood of the Saviour.

Christ conquered death by His own death and Resurrection. Before the coming of the Saviour, the gates of Paradise were closed: all people — both sinners and the righteous — descended into Hades after death. But when the sinless God accepted death and descended into Hades, Hades could not hold Him. Christ led the righteous out of it and opened the gates once and for all for everyone who wishes to follow Him.

(continued on the next page)

The "Fifth Gospel" is what the Turin Shroud (the burial cloths of Christ) is called. Upon it, as on a photographic negative, the Body and Face of Christ are imprinted at the moment of the Resurrection. The cloth bears the wounds from the nails, the thorns of the crown, the marks of the scourge, and the wound from the spear.

We celebrate Pascha every week: every seventh day is dedicated to the Resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Pascha is the first Christian feast. In the Acts of the Apostles, we read that Christians gathered together (in Greek, "into the Church") on the first day after the Sabbath — that is, on Sunday — for thanksgiving and the breaking of bread, the celebration of the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is the Paschal Sacrament of the Church. All who confess Christ as God may commune with the risen Saviour — literally becoming part of Him. This takes place in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, through the reception of His Body and Blood. Christ conquered death, but to share in His victory is the free choice of every person.

The Paschal service is the most solemn of all. Nearly all the prayers are sung, and the feast itself does not conclude until a week later, on the day dedicated to the Confession of the Apostle Thomas.

At the Paschal Midnight Service, the Gospel is read in many languages, for the Resurrection of Christ concerns all people, wherever and whenever they may live.



The Paschal Procession of the Cross at midnight is an ancient Byzantine tradition. In those times, the Baptism of new Christians took place twice a year: on Holy Saturday before the Paschal Liturgy, and on the eve of the Nativity (or rather, of Theophany: Baptism and Nativity were celebrated on the same day). The preparation for Baptism (catechesis) took place throughout Great Lent. The Sacrament itself was performed in a dedicated baptistery, from which the newly baptized, bearing lit candles and robed in white baptismal garments, processed solemnly into the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia.

The celebration of Pascha continues for 40 days until the Ascension of Christ into Heaven. Throughout this time the solemn Paschal Canon — the work of St. John of Damascus — resounds in the Church, and many prayers are replaced by the singing of the Troparion of the feast: **"Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!"** "Christ is risen!" — "Indeed He is risen!" — thus Christians greet one another throughout the entire season of Pascha. The tradition of the Paschal greeting is rooted in the events described in the Gospel, when the myrrh-bearing women came to the Apostles with the news of Christ's Resurrection.

The tradition of coloring eggs at Pascha is based on Church tradition: St. Mary Magdalene came to proclaim the Resurrection of Christ to the Emperor Tiberius and, not wishing to come empty-handed, brought him a hen's egg as a gift. The Emperor replied that it was more likely for that egg to turn from white to red than for him to believe such a tale — and in his hands the egg turned red.

Orthodox magazine 'Thomas'

Paschal Miracles

Real stories from people like us

A Prayer That Opens Doors by *Olga Emelyanenko, a priest's wife and mother of many children*



I grew up in a large family of a clergyman. I had 10 brothers and sisters, and we all helped our parents at the church: the boys served in the altar, while the girls sang in the choir under our mother's direction.

From earliest childhood, Pascha was inseparably bound up with miracle for each of us. There was the distribution of kulichs to the parishioners — sweet loaves we had baked with our mother throughout Holy Week! Or the way our hearts would stand still during the night service, when the choir, and then the whole church, would sing "*Christ is risen from the dead...*" — first quietly, then louder and louder. That sense of Paschal joy was planted in us by our mother and father.

One Pascha, something happened that left such an indelible impression on me — still a small child — that I have remembered it all my life. After the Paschal service, my brothers, sisters, and I were making our way home, already tired and half-asleep. Dawn was just beginning to break, and it was quite cold. We longed to get home and finally begin the long-awaited

festive meal. But for some inexplicable reason, we could not open the front door. No matter how many times we tried, the lock simply would not turn. We had to wait until our father finished blessing the kulichs at the church and came to help us.

But even our father could not open the door. After several unsuccessful attempts, it became clear that the door would have to be forced. Then our father said a prayer, made the sign of the Cross over the lock, turned the key — and the door opened.

On that Paschal morning, I understood what power is held by prayer, by the sign of the Cross, and above all — by faith. Which can turn any trouble into a miracle.

"Christ is Risen! What More of a Miracle Do You Want?" by *Anastasia Kuznetsova, homemaker*

My children and I were driving home from church at four in the morning. Johnny was eight years old at the time, and it was his first Paschal night service.

The highway. Dawn breaking. Johnny says, disappointed: "I thought there would be some kind of miracle. I really want a miracle!" And just then, a moose steps out onto the road right in front of us! I was driving slowly, so I managed to stop about 50 meters away from him.

He crossed half the highway, stopped, and looked at us — as if to say: "*Christ is risen! What more of a miracle do you want, boy?*" Having stood there a while, allowing us to admire him, the moose slowly walked back into the forest. My son was overjoyed: "Mama, God heard me!"



The Humor of the Saints

What if a human being is not merely a creature that walks upright — or even one that reasons? What if a human being is, above all, a creature capable of irony? After all, we laugh every day. Even when things are very hard or very sad, we do not lose this ability — to laugh.

We laugh at good jokes and not-so-good ones. We laugh at ourselves, we laugh at others. A human smile is the most remarkable thing that happens to a human face. It can bring peace to the heart. It can smooth sharp edges, it can ease pain. But the most important thing, humanity understood long ago: humor is a wonderful weapon against a gloomy and hopeless view of death. Holy people understood this better than anyone. They often smiled and joked — but in a very particular, a very holy way.

St. Paisios of the Holy Mountain



Consider Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain. Once, a boy came to him and asked how he might find Elder Paisios. The Elder replied: "He's gone out for cigarettes." The boy timidly suggested that perhaps one of his visitors smoked, to which the Elder said: "Oh, that Paisios is a good-for-nothing old man — drinks and smokes." But the boy decided to wait for this "good-for-nothing smoker." Paisios later told this story to his visitors as an example of a good heart that is incapable of judging others.

Patriarch Tikhon



The times were heavy and dark — yet above the door of his office hung a sign that read: "*Do not disturb regarding counter-revolutionary matters*". One archimandrite came away from a personal meeting with the Patriarch quite displeased at such "lack of seriousness". "All he does is chuckle and stroke his cat," said the "serious" archimandrite. But the holy hierarch joked and smiled — and in doing so, calmed anxious hearts and eased the pain of the age.

Hieromartyr Benjamin of Petrograd



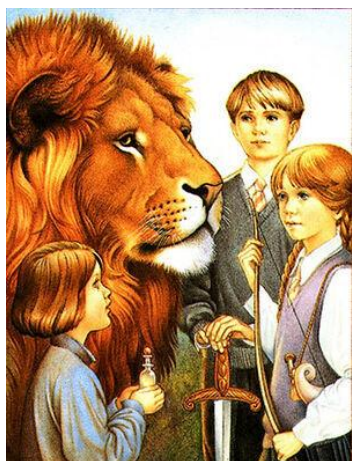
But sometimes holy people joke with bitterness. On May 22, 1922, as the arrested Metropolitan of Petrograd, Benjamin, was being led out of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, he was met by Archpriest Alexander Vvedensky — the man whose efforts had fabricated the case against him. Vvedensky approached him with hands folded to receive a blessing. "Father Alexander," the Metropolitan replied, "we are not in the Garden of Gethsemane". — recalling the well-known Gospel scene of Judas's betrayal. The fate of Metropolitan Benjamin was already clear: execution by firing squad.

So, what distinguishes the humor of holy people from our own? It is never directed against a person; there is no contempt in it. Their jokes strengthen, ease pain, and teach goodness.

And sometimes holy people smile in the face of death itself. And I think that when death looks upon the smiles of the saints, it is always left bewildered.

And all of this — only because **Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death!**

The Lion Who Came Back to Life



Have you ever read *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis? It's a wonderful story about four children — **Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy** — who step through a magical wardrobe in the old Professor's house and find themselves in a land called **Narnia**, where animals talk and a great and good Lion named **Aslan** is the true King.

When Lucy first arrives in Narnia, she meets a friendly faun named **Mr. Tumnus**, who tells her about the land. But Narnia is in trouble — it is covered in snow and ice by an evil White Witch. It is always winter, and never Christmas. The children find shelter and friendship with the kind **Beavers**, who tell them about Aslan and his power to set Narnia free.

But one of the children, Edmund, does something very wrong and falls into the Witch's power. She demands his life. Then Aslan makes an extraordinary choice: **he gives his own life in Edmund's place**. He is killed on a great Stone Table.

It seems like all hope is lost. But then — the Stone Table **cracks**, and Aslan rises from the dead, more glorious and powerful than before! He breathes new life onto all who were frozen and turned to stone by the Witch. And in the end, Aslan wins the great battle, and Edmund is restored as a King of Narnia.

C.S. Lewis wrote this story because he loved **Jesus Christ and His Resurrection**. Aslan is not Jesus — but the story reminds us of what Jesus did for us: He gave His life, and on the third day, **He rose from the dead**. Just like Aslan breathed life onto the frozen creatures, Christ brings us new life!

This is why we celebrate Pascha — Christ is Risen!

In the Professor's Room



Can You Spot All 10 Differences?



★ Narnia Word Search

L	A	S	N	P	E	D	M	U	N	D	G
T	I	M	U	G	R	A	C	W	E	N	P
E	H	O	T	U	M	N	U	S	K	I	J
B	R	I	N	F	L	O	R	Y	C	U	L
S	L	A	M	P	O	S	T	H	I	B	A
M	U	L	J	E	S	H	E	K	O	V	T
W	H	I	M	S	R	I	C	S	A	L	R
I	G	A	H	W	E	A	U	L	P	Y	E
T	U	S	L	K	V	S	U	I	E	N	T
C	A	L	N	S	A	G	H	O	T	B	N
H	E	A	V	N	E	T	S	L	E	H	I
G	I	N	T	E	B	O	R	D	R	A	W

LION	PETER	WINTER
WITCH	SUSAN	LAMPPOST
LUCY	TUMNUS	BEAVERS
EDMUND	WARDROBE	ASLAN

Children's Corner: *Christ is Risen!* Drop in with your children and grandchildren!



Color the Easter Eggs! And add 'Happy Easter' (or 'Happy Pascha') words!

At Pascha, we give each other **red eggs** as a sign of joy — Christ is Risen!

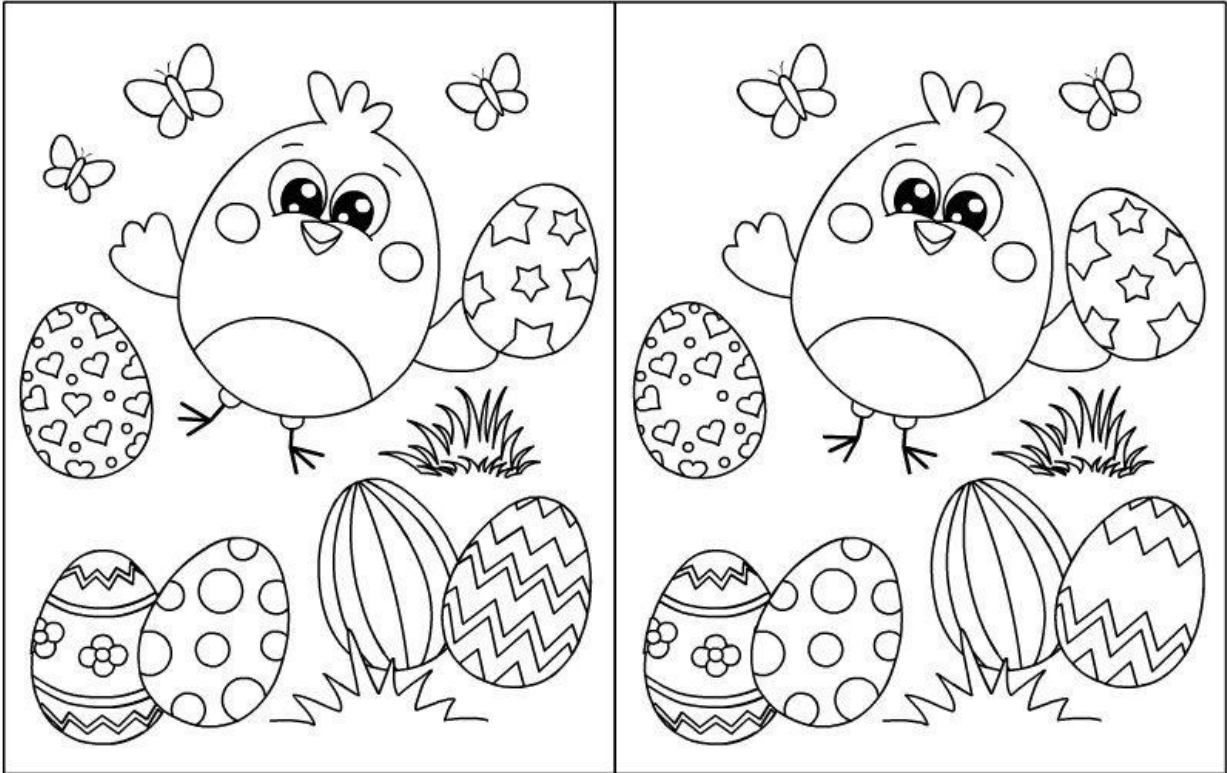
The egg reminds us that life is hidden inside something that looks quiet and still like a stone — just as Christ lay in the tomb, and then rose again, alive forever! The red color reminds us of His precious Blood, given for us. But you can also use blue for the heavens He opened for us, yellow for the light of His glory, green for the new life He gives, and purple for His royal kingship, and many other colors!

*As you color these eggs, think about the greatest gift: **Life has won over death!***

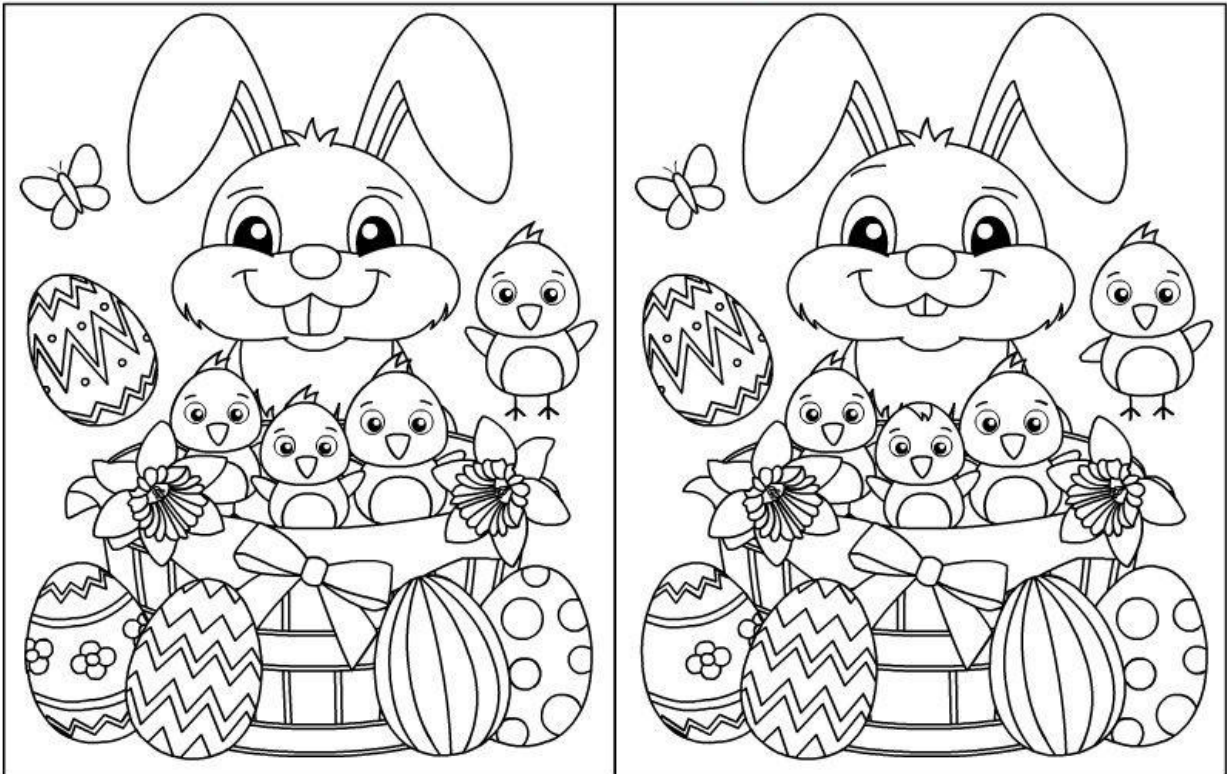


Happy Easter!

Can you find 5 differences?



Now find 10 — if you can!



Christ is risen!

April-May 2026

Truly He is risen!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<u>April 11-12 - Holy Easter!</u> 8:00 pm – Vegreville 11:30 pm – Paschal Matins and Liturgy with blessing of Easter baskets at St. Mary's Church, at Nisku 10:00 am – CALMAR - Paschal Service	<u>13</u> <u>Bright Monday</u> No Fast all Week	<u>14</u> <u>Bright Tuesday</u>	<u>15</u> <u>Bright Wednesd.</u>	<u>16</u> <u>Bright Thursday</u>	<u>17</u> <u>Bright Friday</u>	<u>18</u> <u>Bright Saturday</u>
<u>April 19</u> 2nd Sunday of Pascha. Thomas Sunday, Anti- Pascha. 10:00 a.m. - Liturgy at St. Barbara's Cathedral	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u> Universal Orthodox commemoration All names will be read at St. Mary's cemetery (11 am)	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>April 26</u> 3rd Sunday of Pascha. Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women. 10:00 am – Liturgy - Grave Yard Service – CALMAR	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>May 1</u>	<u>May 2</u>
<u>May 3</u> 4th Sunday of Pascha. 10:00 am – Graveyard Service – HOREN, at St. John's Church cemetery	<u>May 4</u>	<u>May 5</u>	<u>May 6</u>	<u>May 7</u>	<u>May 8</u>	<u>May 9</u> 10:00 am - Liturgy - Grave Yard Service – Bonnyville
<u>May 10</u> 10:00 am - Liturgy - Grave Yard Service - VEGREVILLE 3:30 pm - Grave Yard Service – WARWICK	<u>May 11</u>	<u>May 12</u>	<u>May 13</u>	<u>May 14</u>	<u>May 15</u>	<u>May 16</u>
<u>May 17</u> 10:00 am - Liturgy & Graveyard Service with fellowship to follow, NISKU 3:00 pm - Grave Yard Service - Old Cemetery	<u>May 18</u> Victoria Day - 10:00 am - Liturgy – Ukrainian Village (TBC)	<u>May 19</u>	<u>May 20</u>	<u>May 21</u> Holy Ascension Day	<u>May 22</u>	<u>May 23</u> 2:00 pm – Grave Yard Service – THORSBY
<u>May 24</u> 10:00 am - Liturgy - Patronal Feast – CALMAR – (Blessing of water)	<u>May 25</u>	<u>May 26</u>	<u>May 27</u>	<u>May 28</u>	<u>May 29</u>	<u>May 30</u>
<u>May 31</u> 10:00 am - Liturgy - Patronal Feast – THORSBY – Holy Trinity Day. (Blessing of water)	More commemoration days for Orthodox IX: June 27 - 10:00 am – Liturgy - Grave Yard Service – MACNUTT; 5:00 pm - Grave Yard Service – INSINGER June 28 - 10:00 am – Liturgy - Patronal Feast. After the service - Grave Yard Service - FOAM LAKE Graveyard Service at TOMAHAWK (municipal cemetery) – in July (the day - TBC)					