

# HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

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## PASCHA 2017

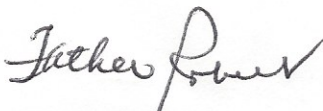
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We find ourselves in a time when the spoken and written word is doubted, twisted, challenged and denied. The attempts to bankrupt the content of language – the assault on the word that in turn leads to the assault on the truth is indeed disheartening and frightening. To think that the devaluation of language has no impact on our celebration of Pascha would be naïve. When it comes to language there are no innocent bystanders. Each of us is a processor of the various forms of language. In the case of our celebration of Pascha, how we process the multifaceted word of our worship either draws us more deeply into its mystery or leaves us outside the Lord's bridal chamber.

In our celebration we are called again and again to be attentive to the richness of the word that cannot be contained in the printed text. The omnipresent word proceeding from divine silence is expressed in images, sounds, scents, movements, and clothing/vestments. Yet, as language is manipulated and devaluated the very understanding and experience of the death and resurrection of Christ are affected. Not being familiar with the language of liturgy can distance us from the reality it seeks to draw us into. Even as we stand in the brightness of the Paschal Liturgy we can be deprived of celebrating the feast. When Christ's death, burial and resurrection are understood by alternative facts the message offered is often at best a myth that holds no real significance in our daily lives. By no means are these alternative facts new. From the earliest days of Christianity until now the cross, tomb and resurrection have been understood as events having either no objective historical reality or as embellishments of history produced by the disciples of Jesus.

The recovery of liturgical language and entering the eternal mystery of the feast are dependent first and foremost on our love for the one whose love is revealed through his cross and resurrection. For it is love that leads us into the Savior's liturgy of death where we encounter the empty tomb as light's victory over darkness - of life over death. It is this love that confirms the truth and power of the pre-eternal Word "who became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory." (John 1:14)

En agape,



Father Robert