



Ubique



“united to him”

Christ is Risen!

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God is the beginning
and if we are united to him, we become new again.

Meister Eckhart

Resurrection of the Christ and Women at the Tomb.
Fresco at the Convent of San Marco, Florence. 1440.

Fra Angelico

“Light is life”

The Light of the World

Rev. Timothy Donovan
Sermon, Easter 2012

Christ is the Light of the world. More than anything else, Easter signifies the Light of Christ coming out of the darkness. In old church tradition, Easter services were held at sunrise – just as the sun was peeking over the horizon. This rising of the sun is a symbol of the Resurrection as Christ spreads his Light over all the world.

We see the symbolism of Christ as the Light throughout scripture. The beginning of John’s gospel is one of the most beautiful and poetic passages in the bible. He says, “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 came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, **and this life was the light of the human race.**” (John 1:1-4, New American Bible)

In the Nicene creed, we say that we believe in, “...one Lord, Jesus Christ, the alone born Son of God, begotten of his father before all ages, God of God, *Light of Light.*”

Light is life to us both physically and spiritually. Without the light from our sun, there would be no life on earth. For us to be spiritually alive, we need the Light of Christ within us.

It is interesting to compare light and darkness. Have you ever thought about what darkness really is? You can turn light brighter and dimmer but have you ever tried to turn up the darkness? You can’t do it. There is no “darkness switch” as there is a “light switch”. Darkness is made by taking away the light. When we are in darkness, we have “lost the light”. It is no wonder that that great period of scientific and intellectual growth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is called the Enlightenment. The darkness of ignorance was erased by the light of knowledge.

One reason why, in the Liberal Catholic church, we never use black vestments and don’t wear black clerical clothing is because Christ is the Light. When you take away all light, you are left with with black – with darkness. Since we have Christ in us all the time, we never wear black. His light keeps us from wandering in darkness.

When we look back over Holy Week, we see the symbolism of Light in all the services. On Holy Thursday, we stripped the altar and left it bare – no candles and no light. On Good Friday (which is called Holy Friday in Eastern Orthodoxy, as we will see later), no mass is said and the candles are not lit (except during the Mass of the Presanctified on Friday night). This darkness symbolizes Christ’s death and the darkness of the tomb. For these two days, his Light symbolically leaves our world. On Holy Saturday, we bless the new fire and the Paschal Candle which symbolizes the radiant light of Christ risen from the tomb of darkness on Easter morning.

Christ as the Light is also seen in the *Miracle of the Holy Fire*. Many of you may have heard about it before. This miracle has taken place at the Church of the Resurrection (in a chapel called the Holy Ciborium – by the way, the golden vessel that holds the Hosts is called the ciborium) in Jerusalem on Holy Saturday at the same time, in the same manner, and the same place every single year for centuries. It was first observed in the fourth century and no other miracle is known to occur so regularly and steadily over time. The authenticity of the miracle has been confirmed by the thousands of pilgrims who have independently testified that their candles were lit spontaneously before their eyes.

Pilgrims travel to Jerusalem and assemble at the church on the afternoon of Holy Friday in anticipation of the miracle and chant traditional hymns that date back to the 13th century when the Turks occupied Jerusalem. “We are Christians, we have been Christians for centuries, and we shall be forever and ever. Amen.”

On Holy Saturday, at about 1:00 PM local time, the Orthodox Patriarch enters the Holy Ciborium. In the words of Orthodox Patriarch Diodor, “I enter the tomb and kneel in holy awe in front of the place where Christ lay after His death and where He rose again from the dead. I find my way through the darkness towards the inner chamber in which I fall on my knees.

Here I say certain prayers that have been handed down to us through the centuries and, having said them, I wait. Sometimes I may wait a few minutes, but normally the miracle happens immediately after I have said the prayers. From the core of the very stone on which Jesus lay an indefinable light pours forth. It usually has a blue tint, but the color may change and take many different hues. It cannot be described in human terms.

The light rises out of the stone as mist may rise out of a lake — it almost looks as if the stone is covered by a moist cloud, but it is light. This light each year behaves differently. Sometimes it covers just the stone, while other times it gives light to the whole sepulcher, so that people who stand outside the tomb and look into it will see it filled with light.

The light does not burn — I have never had my beard burnt in all the sixteen years I have been Patriarch in Jerusalem and have received the Holy Fire. The light is of a different consistency than normal fire that burns in an oil lamp. At a certain point the light rises and forms a column in which the fire is of a different nature, so that I am able to light my candles from it.

When I thus have received the flame on my candles, I go out and give the fire first to the Armenian Patriarch and then to the Coptic. Hereafter I give the flame to all people present in the Church.

While the patriarch is inside the chapel kneeling in front of the stone, there is darkness but far from silence outside. One hears a rather loud mumbling, and the atmosphere is very tense. When the Patriarch comes out with the two candles lit and shining brightly in the darkness, a roar of jubilee resounds in the Church.

So, here on Easter morning, like our Eastern Orthodox brethren, we too celebrate the Eternal Light of Christ that lives and moves in each one of us.

In closing, let’s look at a couple of ways that Christ’s Light is special.

The Light of Christ is Perpetual

Christ’s light is forever. Every other source of light we have has a finite life. None of us could live – no life could exist – on our planet without sunlight. But, our sun will eventually use up all its nuclear fuel and burn out.

The Light of Christ is for Everyone

Here we can compare Christ’s light to sunlight. Sunlight shines on everyone all the time. It does not shine on only one country, one church, one race, or one person. You don’t walk down the street and see pillars of darkness where there is no light. Remember that after the Patriarch received the Holy Fire his first action was to share it.

It is the same with Christ’s light. It shines on everyone all the time. It does not matter whether you are rich or poor, where you live or go to church, or what color you are. Christ’s light is always there.

We can, however, block the light. In fact, the only time we see darkness is when we have done something to block the light. Our hearts are like our homes. We can choose to open the blinds and let the light shine in or we can keep the blinds closed and live in darkness – the choice is ours.

So, on this Easter morning, as the Risen Christ spreads his brilliant light over all the world, let’s open our hearts and let that light shine in and through us.

Easter around our Province



*The Easter Altar at St. Gabriel & All Angels LCC,
Fairfield, Iowa.
Photo courtesy of St. Gabriel & All Angels Church.*

*Easter Eucharist at the Church of St. Francis,
Villa Park, Illinois.
Photo courtesy of Sr. Rebecca Collin.*



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*The Easter Altar at the Church of St. Francis,
Villa Park, Illinois.
Photo courtesy of Sr. Rebecca Collin.*

continues...

*Fr. Ian Carman celebrating Easter Eucharist
at the Church of St. Bonaventure,
Colorado Springs, Colorado.
Photo courtesy of Fr. Ian Carman.*



*Fr. Alan Clute after the Easter Eucharist,
St. Michael the Protector Church,
Mountainair, New Mexico.
Photo courtesy of Sr. Kathleen Clute.*

*After Mass, an Easter Egg Hunt, of course!
Our Lady Queen of Angels Church,
Rio Rancho, New Mexico.
Photo courtesy of Kim Hood.*



PROVINCIAL NEWS

Sr. Kathleen Clute and Parish Correspondents

Provincial News

Preliminary Schedule for the GES and Centennial

General Episcopal Synod 15 is scheduled to run from Wednesday, February 3, 2016, through Sunday, February 14, 2016, at Our Lady Queen of Angels Church in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. It will open with Healing and Solemn Benediction on Wednesday, February 3, 2016.

Holy Eucharist will be celebrated each morning, and Solemn Benediction each evening, with the exception of one day off, possibly 2/9. Every day except that day and the Centennial, the attending bishops will be cloistered in synod. Activities are being planned for the wives of the attending bishops; and for at least some of these, other visitors are welcome to participate as well. More details on this will be in the next Ubique.

In addition to the Centennial Pontifical Eucharist on Saturday, February 13, that evening there will be a guest speaker, Mr. Richard Smoley. Mr. Smoley is the author of *Inner Christianity: A Guide to the Esoteric Tradition* and co-author of *Hidden Wisdom: A Guide to the Western Inner Traditions*. He is also the editor of *Quest Books* and *Quest* magazine, both operated by the Theosophical Society in America.

Many volunteers will be needed for our Province to give the visiting Bishops the wonderful experience they deserve. If you are interested in assisting—as clergy, server, musician, host, or in any other capacity, including **before** the GES—please contact Sr. Kathleen Clute, Provincial Secretary, secretary@thelccusa.org.

Call for Musicians

To plan the incidental music for the services during the GES and Centennial celebration next year, I need an idea of how many musicians will be available, especially for February 13, the Centennial Pontifical Eucharist, and for February 14, the closing Eucharist of the GES.

Please contact me at secretary@thelccusa.org if you are planning to come to some or all of the GES/Centennial and you are

- a singer (include soprano, alto, tenor, bass),
- an instrumentalist (include instrument),
- or a composer who has music that might be appropriate for use during censing or Communion.

Contacting me now does not obligate you to attend but will help me in planning. If possible, also let me know the tentative dates you will be available. Thank you!

Sr. Kathleen Clute

Parish News

Church of St. Francis, Villa Park, Illinois

Greetings from St Francis in Villa Park. After digging ourselves out from under the snow we received on Superbowl Sunday, we are happy to welcome Spring.

Last November, we planted a Ginko tree in memory of Deacon James Ascareggi on the church property, under which his ashes were scattered.

We are currently focused, now that the snow has melted, in cleaning up our yard and sprucing up the parsonage. We extend the invitation for any clergy or members of TLCC visiting the Chicago area to consider staying with us in our humble accommodations. Contact us at stfrancisvillapark@hotmail.com.

Sr. Rebecca Collin

St. Raphael & All Angels, Richmond, California

St Raphael's Liberal Catholic Church (LCC) in San Francisco split to establish a branch in Oakland in 1924. That Eastern branch incorporated in 1925 as an Oakland Church, and has had several homes in the Bay Area over time. When Fr. Byron Bole retired in the 1980s the Oakland membership joined the then San Francisco Church in the home of Fr. Steve Kellog.

Through the dedication of its members and clergy, it has persevered over the years moving from building to building, returning back to the East Bay and finally to the homes of Deaconnes Imelda Brown and Fr. Mathias van Thiel, to allow increased re-growth of our Building Fund.

We're pleased to announce that after a lengthy search, now for the first time in many years St Raphael's has a building of its own unto which we'll lay our new cornerstone. We look forward to welcoming all who choose to visit us if you pass by in your travels.

Rev. Edward Gonzales

*The new home
of St. Raphael &
All Angels Church, 332 Harbour Way, Richmond, California.
Photos courtesy of Rev. Edward Gonzales.*



Editor's notes

Rev. Edward Gonzales was ordained to the diaconate by the Regionary Bishop, the Rt. Rev. William S.H. Downey, on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2015, at Our Lady and All Angels Church, Ojai. Rev. Edward will continue to serve in the parish of St. Raphael in the Bay area.



Lillian DesPres singing in choir.

We have received word that Lillian DesPres, wife of Rev. N. Joseph DesPres (retired), passed to the higher life on Monday, April 13, at the family home in Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

Lillian helped establish the music and religious education programs at Our Lady Queen of Angels parish. She will be greatly missed, and our prayers go out to Father Joseph and their family at this difficult time.

May Light perpetual shine upon her.

SAVE THE DATES!

The General Episcopal Synod

February 3-14, 2016

and

The Centennial

of

The Liberal Catholic Church

February 10-13, 2016

Our Lady Queen of Angels Church
Rio Rancho, New Mexico

Highlights

Daily Liturgy

including services in Spanish and French

Our Bishops from around the World

Special Events & Tours

Guest Speaker: Richard Smoley

author of *Inner Christianity: A Guide to the Esoteric Tradition*

US Clergy & Laity are warmly invited.

Hotel details will be published soon on [TheLCCUSA.org](http://www.thelccusa.org)
and announced on the Provincial Facebook page.

Join us for fellowship & inspiration!

Volunteers are still needed.

Email: secretary@thelccusa.org

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Queen of Angels Church

Front page Altar Photo:
Church of St. Francis, Villa Park,
Illinois; Easter 2015.

Contributors freely express their
opinions and beliefs. The Liberal
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for statements or information
marked "official."

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