



+++Mar Andrew Mathew, CJ
Patriarch

A PATRIARCHAL MESSAGE FOR THE GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

*“Behold, the Bridegroom comes at midnight...”
(Matthew 25:6)*

Beloved children in the Lord,

As we enter the dread and saving days of the Great and Holy Week, the Church calls us not merely to remembrance, but to participation in the ineffable mystery of our salvation.

For these holy days are not past events, but a living reality in which heaven and earth are joined, and in which the faithful are invited to walk with Christ—from the Upper Room to Golgotha, from the Tomb to the light-bearing dawn of the Resurrection.

On **Great and Holy Thursday**, we behold the Mystery of Mysteries: the Lord gives Himself as food and drink, saying: *“Take, eat; this is My Body... Drink of it, all of you”* (Matthew 26:26–27). Here is revealed the love that “endures to the end” (John 13:1), and the priesthood is established in the image of Him who came *“not to be served, but to serve”* (Mark 10:45).

On **Great and Holy Friday**, we stand before the life-giving Cross with fear and love. He who is *“the brightness of the Father’s glory”* (Hebrews 1:3) is lifted up, drawing all to Himself (John 12:32). As the holy Father St. John Chrysostom proclaims: *“I call Him King, because I see Him crucified.”* For in the Cross, death itself is slain, and love is revealed as stronger than the grave.

On **Great and Holy Saturday**, all creation is held in sacred silence. As it is written: *“Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and stand with fear and trembling...”* Christ rests in the tomb according to the flesh, yet descends in glory to the depths, as foretold: *“You will not abandon my soul to Hades”* (Psalm 16:10). There He proclaims liberty to the captives (1 Peter 3:19), and Adam, with all the righteous, is raised by the hand of the Life-giver.

Then, in the night brighter than day, the Church cries out with one voice, echoing the faith of the Apostles and the Fathers:

**Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.**

As the great Paschal homily of St. John Chrysostom declares: *“Let no one fear death, for the Savior’s death has set us free.”*

Beloved, let us approach these holy days with watchfulness and repentance, for the Lord calls us: *“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation”* (Matthew 26:41). Let us cleanse our hearts, forgive one another, and return to the Lord with all our being, that we may partake worthily of the Paschal Mystery.

For this is the day the Lord has made (Psalm 118:24)—
the day of new creation,
the day of victory,
the day of eternal life.

May the unwaning Light of the Resurrection illumine your hearts, strengthen your faith, and fill you with the joy that no one can take away (John 16:22).

And may the grace of the risen Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and unto the ages of ages.

Christ is Risen!
Truly He is Risen!

Given under our hand and patriarchal blessing,
in this Holy Week,
in the Year of Our Lord 2026.


+++ Mar Andrew Mathew, C.J.
Patriarch

