

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

**CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, TRAMPLING DOWN DEATH BY DEATH,
AND UPON THOSE IN THE TOMBS BESTOWING LIFE.**

What a powerful message is expressed in the Paschal troparion! Not only has Christ conquered death, but He has destroyed its seemingly invincible hold over mankind as well.

Unlike Western art, which often depicts the Risen Lord bursting forth from the tomb, Orthodox iconography does not attempt to capture the moment of our Lord's Resurrection. Instead, we are presented with the image of Christ actually bestowing life to those in the tomb in the icon commonly referred to as "The Decent into Hades."

In the stirring scene on this morning's church Bulletin cover, Christ's victory over our greatest adversary is clearly portrayed. He extends His arms to Adam and Eve, our first parents. He is surrounded by the righteous men and women of the Old testament , who patiently awaited to be freed from bondage by Him. The dark Abyss of hell lies under His feet, crushed and defeated. Indeed, the icon visually brings to life the words of the 6th ode of the Resurrection Canon: "Your descended into the depths of the earth, and shattered the eternal bars, which held fast those who were captive, O Christ. And on the third day, as Jonah in the whale, You arose from the dead."

Yes this is the "Feast of Feasts" and the "Triumph of Triumphs!" In the words of the Apostle Paul: "Thanks be to God, Who has given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 15:57)