

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop BASIL



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

Diocese of Wichita and
Mid-America

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

P A S C H A 2 0 2 1

Beloved and Christ-loving Clergy, Monastics and Laity of the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America:

I embrace and greet you with a holy kiss in the Name of the Resurrected Theanthropos Jesus Christ, and, together with you and Orthodox Christians throughout the world, I joyfully proclaim that Christ is risen! Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! المسيح قام! Христос Воскрец! Hristos a ïnvat!

On this radiant Feast of feasts I counsel you, my dearly beloved spiritual children, with these timeless words from our Father among the Saints, Ambrose the Bishop of Milan who himself peacefully fell asleep in Christ at dawn on Pascha in the year 397:

What use is there to celebrate Holy Pascha (which means “a passing over”) for those who observe it only externally? What benefit do they receive if they themselves do not pass over and partake of the Paschal Lamb? They deserve every pity and the Church prays for them that our Lord Jesus Christ, our eternal Pascha, set them on the right path and bring them to their senses. And so I too implore you, brethren, to celebrate Pascha in a manner worthy of its significance. Let us sinners celebrate it by passing over from a sinful life to a virtuous one; let those who think of themselves as perfectly righteous celebrate it by passing over from their degree of righteousness to a still higher degree, from piety to greater piety, from perfection to perfection, so that none would remain without passing over to something better, and from that to something far better, ‘forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before’ (*Philip. 3:13*). Celebrating Pascha in this manner, we will remain true Christians, observing our Pascha in a worthy fashion. May the One responsible for the present Feast, and Who Himself lives and reigns in endless time for ever and ever, help us through His grace.

Wishing you and your families a glorious Paschal season and assuring you of my continued love, prayers and blessings, I remain

In the Risen Christ,

+ B A S I L
Bishop of Wichita and Mid-America

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)