

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate
His Holiness Pope Tawadros II
Pope of Alexandria and
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark
The Papal Center



بطيركية الأقباط الأرثوذكس
قداسة البابا الأنبا تواضروس الثاني
بابا الأسكندرية
وبطيريك الكرازة المرقسية
المقر البابوي

222 Ramses St., Abbaseya, Cairo, Egypt

Πατριάρχης

222 شارع رمسيس ، العباسية ، القاهرة ، مصر

Tel: 024822580

Fax: 0235365880

email: office@popetawadros.org

0235365880 فاكس:

024822580 تليفون:

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In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God. Amen.

Ekhristos anesti ... Alithos anesti, Christ is risen ... Truly He is risen.

I congratulate you, beloved, in all of our Coptic churches worldwide on this feast and our most joyful occasion. I wish to send my greetings to all the fathers, the Metropolitans, the Bishops, the priests, the deacons, church boards, archons, youth, children, and families. I send this greeting from Egypt. I congratulate you and rejoice with you on this feast. The Feast of the Resurrection exists and affects all our lives. However, in these few minutes, I wish to contemplate why we celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection and why it is essential. We celebrate it for fifty full days as we consider the Holy Fifty Days to be one long Sunday in which we celebrate the glorious Resurrection. I want to present you with three reasons for celebrating the glorious Feast of the Resurrection.

First: The Resurrection is the most magnificent event of our history and in our life. The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on the third day is the most superb event in the history of our Church. When reminiscing on the events of the previous week, which are the events of the Passion Week, we find that the Crucifixion and the Resurrection to be two sides of the same coin. The Crucifixion led to the Resurrection, and the Resurrection happened because of the Crucifixion. We spend all the weeks and Sundays of Great Lent, then Passion Week with its asceticism, just so on Good Friday, we can say with St. Paul the Apostle: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). In the Resurrection, we see the empty tomb and the guards guarding it, and the large stone that covered the door of the tomb. After three days, our Lord Jesus Christ rose. Much archaeological and historical evidence exists. However, this is in addition to prophetic testimonies. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so [was] the Son of Man," our Lord Jesus Christ, "Be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40). In the Old Testament, one of the plagues in Egypt during the time of Pharaoh and Moses the Prophet, there was darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. Then the darkness was dispelled, and light came to be. When the Marys came with burial spices for the tomb, and on their way to the tomb to place the burial spices as a sign of their devotion, they were shocked to hear the following that is mentioned in the Bible: He who was placed here "is not here, but is risen!" (Luke 24:6). The Resurrection is the most magnificent event of our history and in our life.

The second reason for celebrating the glorious Resurrection this extended celebration is that the Resurrection happened because of the Crucifixion; and we were taught by the late Fr. Bishoy Kamel That Christianity without the cross is like a bride without a bridegroom. Without the Resurrection, our Christian faith is futile. The Resurrection is the foundation of faith and the foundation of our doctrine on which our Christianity stands. Without the Resurrection, the Church would not exist, nor the Gospel, nor preaching, nor a foundation for our faith.

Therefore, the second reason for celebrating it is the foundation of faith. For this reason, the first hymn we say at Midnight is: *“Arise O children of the light,”* referring to the Resurrection. In the hymn of “Aripsalin,” we say, *“O sing to Him who was crucified for us ... and resurrected.”* This praise concerning the Three Youth is said in the middle of the Midnight Praise. Resurrection is the foundation of faith in our life. When we pray the Matins prayer every day, we celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection: *“Through Your light, O Lord, we see the light.”* We celebrate it also every Sunday when we attend the church: *“This is the day that the Lord has made”* (Psalm 118:24). The Resurrection becomes the foundation of our faith. We have no hope in eternity Except through the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The third reason for celebrating the Resurrection for all these days is that the Resurrection is the source of our joy and peace. We read St. John’s Gospel chapter 20, verse 20: *“Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord,”* When He appeared to them in the upper room While the doors were shut, and they were full of fear and terrified, And our Lord Jesus Christ appeared in their midst, and said, *“Peace be with you.”* Thus, the Resurrection because a cause for joy and peace. For this reason, we call the Gospel “the Good News,” that is to say, “Joyful News.” Every time you hold your Bible, you are holding the source of joy in your life. We call the Resurrection “Easter” Related to the word “East,” out of which light shines, with gladness and joy. The Resurrection is peace towards humanity. *“This is the day the Lord made; Let us greatly rejoice, and be glad therein”* (Psalm 118:24).

I congratulate you and all our beloved brothers, the fathers, the metropolitans, and bishops, The fathers, the priests, the deacons, and every servant in all the Church. I congratulate every congregation in every church. Let us all pray for the peace of the world and all the beloved. We raise up special prayers, as we are rejoicing through this Resurrection, for this pandemic that humankind is enduring, that God may protect all humans in every place, and take away this hardship from everyone, and make us rejoice through this glorious Resurrection in our life. I send you greetings from Egypt in the Papal Residence in Abbasiyya, Cairo. I congratulate all in every diocese in Europe, North America, Canada, South America, Africa, the Holy See in Jerusalem, the Gulf Region, Asia, and Australia. My greetings and love to all of you, wishing you every goodness and health. Ekhristos anesti ... Alithos anesti.

Pawadros II