

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

“God is dead.” So speaks the German philosopher Nietzsche. Many in our society are drawn to this phrase, they believe that “religion,” however they define it, is for primitive people, people who do not know any better: our modern world has no place for such ignorant people. Yet this night is more dazzling than the sun: Christ is risen!

“God is dead.” Our world cries out to us, “leave your rituals, your beliefs, your closed mindedness.” What is our response? “Christ is risen!”

“God is dead.” No! Certainly not! It is true God died – the Cross tells us the depths of his love that God would experience death – but death is not the end, God died yet God arose: Christ is risen!

“Christ is risen!” is our response, it is our answer to the world. Why do we believe in One God? Christ is risen! Why do we pray? Christ is risen! Why are we members of Christ’s body? Because Christ is risen! All our hope, all our love, all our faith is expressed in this one phrase.

When people dismiss *faith* as something for which we do not have proof they do not understand *faith*. Our Faith is based on the eye-witnesses of the risen Christ, those who preferred ridicule, suffering, torture and death rather than deny the joy of their life. Our Faith is based on the certainty of Christ’s resurrection.

And we live that certainty tonight, through the whole season of Pascha and beyond that it may vivify us and our own Faith. When we greet each other – and our neighbours, our colleagues, our families, our friends – when we greet each other and when we take our leave, when we rise up and retire at night, let us affirm the certainty of our Faith and proclaim with our voice: Christ is risen! Hristos a înviat! Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! Христόςъ воскресъ! Le Christ est ressuscité! Al-Masīh qām! Christus ist auferstanden!

To our risen Lord be the glory together with his unoriginate Father and the All-holy, Good and Life-creating Spirit, Amen.