

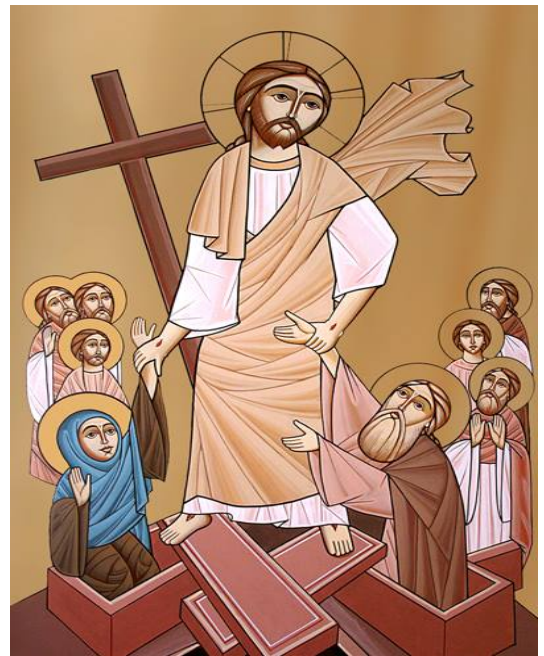
“Our Firm Hope”

A Homily on the Glorious Feast of The Resurrection

By St. Cyril of Alexandria

Those who have a sure hope, guaranteed by the Spirit, that they will rise again lay hold of what lies in the future as though it were already present. They say: “Outward appearances will no longer be our standard in judging other men. Our lives are all controlled by the Spirit now, and are not confined to this physical world that is subject to corruption. The light of the Only-Begotten has shone on us, and we have been transformed into the Word, the source of all life. While sin was still our master, the bonds of death had a firm hold on us, but now that the righteousness of Christ has found a place in our hearts we have freed ourselves from our former condition of corruptibility.”

This means that none of us lives in the flesh anymore, at least not in so far as living in the flesh means being subject to the weaknesses of the flesh, which include corruptibility. “Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet we know Him thus no longer,” says Saint Paul (2 Cor. 5:16). By this he meant that the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us; He suffered death in the flesh in order to give all men life. It was in this flesh that we knew Him before, but we do so no longer. Even though He remains in the flesh, since He came to life again on the third day and is now with His Father in Heaven, we know that He has passed beyond the life of the flesh; for “Having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God” (Rom. 6:9-10).



Since Christ has, in this way, become the source of life for us, we who follow in His footsteps must not think of ourselves as living in the flesh any longer, but as having passed beyond it. Saint Paul’s saying is absolutely true that “If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). We have been justified by our faith in Christ and the power of the curse has been broken. Christ’s coming to life again for our sake has put an end to the sovereignty of death. We have come to know the true God and to worship him in spirit and in truth, through the Son, our mediator, who sends down upon the world the Father’s blessings.

And so Saint Paul shows deep insight when he says: “Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 5:18). For the mystery of the incarnation and the renewal it accomplished could not have taken place without the Father’s will. Through

Christ we have gained access to the Father, for as Christ Himself says, no one comes to the Father except through Him. “Now all things are of God,” then It is He “who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18).