

An Easter Vigil Homily by St. John Chrysostom

Part of the Easter Vigil homily of St. John Chrysostom, this extraordinary Early Church Father.

Is there anyone who is a devout lover of God? Let them enjoy this beautiful bright festival!
Is there anyone who is a grateful servant? Let them rejoice and enter into the joy of their Lord!
Are there any weary with fasting? Let them now receive their wages!

Let us all enter into the joy of the Lord! First and last alike receive your reward; rich and poor, rejoice together! Sober and slothful, celebrate the day!

You that have kept the fast, and you that have not, rejoice today for the Table is richly laden! Feast royally on it, the calf is a fatted one. Let no one go away hungry. Partake, all, of the cup of faith. Enjoy all the riches of His goodness!

Let no one grieve at his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed. Let no one mourn that he has fallen again and again; for forgiveness has risen from the grave. Let no one fear death, for the Death of our Saviour has set us free. He has destroyed it by enduring it.

He destroyed Hades when He descended into it. He put it into an uproar even as it tasted of His flesh. Isaiah foretold this when he said, "You, O Hell, have been troubled by encountering Him below."

Hell was in an uproar because it was done away with.

It was in an uproar because it is mocked.

It was in an uproar, for it is destroyed.

It is in an uproar, for it is annihilated.

It is in an uproar, for it is now made captive.

Hell took a body, and discovered God.

It took earth, and encountered Heaven.

It took what it saw, and was overcome by what it did not see.

O death, where is thy sting?

O Hades, where is thy victory?

Christ is Risen, and you, O death, are annihilated!

Christ is Risen, and the evil ones are cast down!

Christ is Risen, and the angels rejoice!

Christ is Risen, and life is liberated!

Christ is Risen, and the tomb is emptied of its dead; for Christ having risen from the dead, is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

To Him be Glory and Power forever and ever. Amen!