



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

MOTHER'S DAY 2016

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy,
Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,
Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council,
Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhood,
Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools,
Directors and Participants of all of the Youth Organizations, and all devout
Orthodox Christians of the Greek Orthodox Communities of our Holy Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved,

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!!!

CHRIST IS RISEN!!!

*“When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by,
He said to His mother “Woman, behold your son!” Then He said to the disciple,
‘Behold your mother!’ And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home”
(Jn 19: 26-27)*

The joy of having a mother is to be able to celebrate her love, her care and her kindness every day. If in the history of salvation, it was central that our incarnate God took on human nature through the free consent of a woman, it is because becoming a mother relates to the mystery of sharing. In the case of Jesus Christ, the Theotokos, the Virgin Mary, the paradigm of motherhood *par excellence*, gave her Son everything she was, so that God could assume the limitations of our nature. Jesus gave all humanity a Mother in the person of the Theotokos when He entrusted her and Saint John the Theologian to one another. She is closer to us than we have ever been to anybody, or even to ourselves, because she has loved and suffered the divine glory and the tragedy of her Son in which all lives are recapitulated. This is why we pray during all of our services: *“Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.”*

The mystery of sharing is at the heart of the vocation of motherhood. First, it is by sharing love under the merciful eye of God that we exist. There is no sharing without otherness and the presence of the other, the person with whom a shared love brings a

new life into being. Second, the mystery of sharing is life itself. Nothing can replace the joy of giving birth, a joy so powerful that it immediately erases the pain of labor and celebrates the triumph of life. Last but not least, in motherhood the mystery of sharing becomes an ascetic and sacrificial reality. On a daily basis, mothers live out devotion and self-denial with much prayer. Motherhood is sharing love, life and sacrifice.

Let us celebrate Mother's Day by saying a genuine and loving "Thank you" to all mothers, because, after all, we should not take motherhood for granted. It is always a gift from above. This is the Orthodox ethos in all things. Indeed, as Saint Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: *"in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* (1Th 5: 18)

To all of you, my beloved spiritual sons and daughters in the Risen Lord, I wholeheartedly extend my abiding love and fervent prayer during this joyful and luminous Paschal Season.

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!!!

CHRIST IS RISEN!!!

HAPPY MOTH'R'S DAY!!!

With Paternal Love and Blessings in the Risen Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Evangelos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The word "Metropolitan" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Evangelos" is written below it in a similar but slightly smaller script. The background of the signature area is a light gray grid pattern.

† E V A N G E L O S
Metropolitan of New Jersey