



## GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS <sup>OF</sup> ATLANTA

### ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΤΛΑΝΤΑΣ



My Beloved Ones,

**Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη!**  
Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

As we continue this Paschal season, our Church has dedicated this Sunday to the Myrrh Bearing Women. Consider, that after Christ's betrayal, the remaining Disciples (apart from John the Beloved Disciple) fled in fear. Let us also consider that this conclusion to the Gospel of Mark comes after Christ is misunderstood by so many; not only the leaders who called for His Crucifixion, but even his home village of Nazareth, of which Christ said, "*A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.*" (Mark 6:4) Even His own Disciples have

difficulty understanding His salvific mission. Of all those who followed Christ, the women showed greater courage, as they did not turn away watching their Lord give up His spirit from the Cross.

Think about their bravery, for as the Gospel says, they "*...went to the tomb when the sun had risen...*" (Mark 16:2) The tomb was under heavy guard, but such was their respect and love for the Lord, that they were willing to go on a dark and dangerous journey to honor Him. And our Lord, in His love, bestowed the gift of proclaiming His Resurrection first to these ones who had never wavered in spirit.

Even so, we read at the conclusion of this week's Gospel that, "*...they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.*" (Mark 16:8) We know, of course, that the women proclaim the Resurrection to His Disciples; but the beauty of this pericope poses a question to us the reader.

We, who read and hear this passage, are also standing before the empty tomb. We see the burial sheets—and now the Evangelist asks us: are we to flee in fear and disbelief (like so many in Mark's Gospel) or are we to understand and follow the Resurrected Christ, carrying the Good News, in imitation of the Myrrh Bearing Women?

**+ALEXIOS**  
Metropolitan of Atlanta