

The Easter Sermon of John Chrysostom

If any be pious and a lover of God,
let him rejoice in this fair and radiant festival.

If any be a faithful servant
let him enter into the joy of his Lord.

If any be weary with fasting,
let him now enjoy his payment.

If anyone has labored from the first hour,
let him receive today his just reward.

If anyone has come after the third hour,
let him now be thankful that the feast is at hand,
If anyone has waited until after the sixth hour,
let him not be anxious, no loss shall be his own.

If anyone has tarried until the ninth hour,
let him draw near also, shedding all his doubts.

If anyone has come only at the eleventh hour,
let him not be fearful because of his delay.

For the Master is bountiful
and receives the last even as the first.

He gives repose to him who came at the eleventh hour
just as to one who labored from the first.

The tardy are shown mercy
and the timely are made whole.

To the one he gives,
on the other he bestows.

He honors the deed and praises the intention.

Let all therefore enter into the joy of our Lord,
(let both the first and those who came later receive their wages)

Let rich and poor dance with one another.

You sober and you heedless celebrate the day.

You who have fasted and you who have not
rejoice in this occasion.

The table is full-laden
let all enjoy the feast.

The calf is fatted,
let no one go forth hungry.

Let all partake of the banquet of faith,

let all partake of the riches of goodness.

Let none mourn his poverty,
for the kingdom stands before us.
Let none lament his failings,
forgiveness has risen from the tomb.
Let none fear death,
For the death of the Savior has set us free.

He quenched death when it had tasted his flesh.
He despoiled Hades when he descended thereto
Foreseeing this, Isaiah cried:
'Hell was embittered when it met you face to face.'

It was embittered for it was made void,
It was embittered for it was mocked,
It was embittered for it was slain,
It was embittered for it was despoiled.
It was embittered for it was led off in chains.

It received a body and encountered God,
It received earth and came face to face with heaven.
It received what it saw and fell where it could not see.

Death where is thy sting,
Hades where is thy victory?

Christ is risen and you are cast down,
Christ is risen and the demons are fallen,
Christ is risen and the angels rejoice,
Christ is risen and life is made free.
Christ is risen and there is none dead in the tomb.

For Christ is risen from the dead as the first fruits of those that fell asleep.

To him be glory and power forever and ever, Amen.