

Easter is a Week of Weeks, a Fullness of Fullness

Some, it seems, just cannot get enough of celebrating; apparently there are those who think it adds to the festive character of Christmas to keep Christmas lights up all year long, figuratively, and perhaps also literally! Some of us feel that celebrations are only truly festive when they are somehow different from everyday life in some way or other. "If all the year were playing holidays, to sport would be as tedious as to work," as Shakespeare wrote, "but when they seldom come, they wished-for come."

It does seem, though, that the Church of Christ can hardly get enough celebration out of Easter; the feast lasts for a full seven weeks. And "full" is indeed the word: in Holy Scripture, seven is the number of completion, as in a "full week"; and Easter is a fullness of fullness, a week of weeks, seven times seven days. And how else could the Church of Christ mark the significance of what she celebrates at this greatest feast - the salvation of sinners having been completed, death having been overcome, our eternal life in the glory of God having begun - other than by celebrating it is an entirely new reality, a fullness of fullness, a week of weeks?

The celebration of Easter lasting for seven weeks signifies that the resurrection of our Lord Jesus is what His Church always celebrates; although there are different seasons through the year, and different celebrations, each with its own focus and flavour, truly Christian worship is always worship in the light of the resurrection of Christ, always worship of the risen Christ who lives in His Church, and gives His own life to His Christians, in His Word and worship. The only reason for the Church of Christ to worship at all, at any time, is that Christ is risen: that with His sufferings and death the price and penalty has been paid in full for the sin of all sinners, and in abundance, and so there was no need for Him to remain in death, who died for the sin of the world, and so He is in fact no longer dead, rather, He is risen, and has set His Church in the world to proclaim to all sinners His promise of full and complete forgiveness for all sin, of rescue from eternal death and damnation, of eternal life with Him in the fullness of His goodness and His glory.

Because He is risen, only therefore is it that Christian worship has any meaning. As such, all Christian worship is resurrection worship; in this sense, for the Church of Christ, it is always Easter! And this is what it signifies that Easter is celebrated as a week of weeks, a fullness of fullness.