



Coptic Orthodox Church
Diocese of Melbourne and
Affiliated Regions

88-154 Park Road, Donvale, 3111
PO Box 1150, Mitcham North,
Victoria, Australia 3132

phone: +61 3 9874 8206
fax: +61 3 9874 5962

email: Bishop@MelbCopts.org.au
www.MelbCopts.org.au

COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH • Diocese of Melbourne

Feast of the Resurrection

20 April 2014

His Grace Bishop Suriel

Bishop of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions

Christ's Resurrection Enlightens our Minds and Hearts

**“Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?’”
(Luke 24:31-32)**

Dear blessed clergy and beloved brethren of the Christ loving Diocese of Melbourne and its affiliated regions. Pi Ekhrastos Aftonf! Khen Ou Meth Mi Aftonf! Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen! It gives me great joy to greet you with this triumphal greeting with which we Orthodox Christians share together during the holy fifty days of Eastertide.

St. Paul teaches us that to know Christ we must know His death and Resurrection, “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.” (Philippians 3:10) The disciples that walked with the Lord Christ on the road to Emmaus knew Him at the breaking and the blessing of the bread. Christ was the living bread that suffered, died and was resurrected in order to enlighten us of the eternal life to come and to grant us victory over death and sin.

These same disciples said, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:31-32) The word of God has this affect on our hearts; it enlightens our hearts



Coptic Orthodox Church
Diocese of Melbourne and
Affiliated Regions

88-154 Park Road, Donvale, 3111
PO Box 1150, Mitcham North,
Victoria, Australia 3132

phone: +61 3 9874 8206
fax: +61 3 9874 5962

email: Bishop@MelbCopts.org.au
www.MelbCopts.org.au

COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH • Diocese of Melbourne

towards the risen Christ Who is the Saviour of the world. When our hearts and minds are enlightened through reading the Scriptures and living by them daily, it is then that we can go out into the world with great courage to preach the message of salvation in the risen Christ to every creature.

It is only then that we can fully comprehend our own humanity after our eyes are opened and we understand the meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ. That through the death of Christ He conquered death and raised us up with Him anew. St. Paul tells the Colossians, “put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.” (Colossians 3:10)

A prominent Orthodox scholar teaches us that, “it is only through the Pascha of the Lord that the disciples came to know who He truly is.” Even though the disciples lived with Christ for several years, saw His miracles firsthand and heard His divine teachings and yet they abandon Him during His Passion and at the cross.

That same scholar reminds us that, “Before the Cross, the disciples simply do not understand who Christ is. But then, when they see him crucified they don’t understand either: they run in fear. Nor do they understand when they discover the empty tomb.” After the resurrection the disciples still do not recognize Christ immediately as can be seen in the meeting of the two disciples with Christ on the road to Emmaus. It is only when the Risen Lord opens the Scriptures and explains to them how Moses and all the Prophets had prophesied about how the Lord had to suffer to enter into His glory. It is only then that the disciples’ hearts begin to soften and their eyes were finally opened with the breaking of the bread. It is at this instant that the crucified and exalted Lord vanishes from their sight.



Coptic Orthodox Church
Diocese of Melbourne and
Affiliated Regions

88-154 Park Road, Donvale, 3111
PO Box 1150, Mitcham North,
Victoria, Australia 3132

phone: +61 3 9874 8206
fax: +61 3 9874 5962

email: Bishop@MelbCopts.org.au
www.MelbCopts.org.au

COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH • Diocese of Melbourne

That Orthodox scholar also reminds us that, “The risen Lord leaves us a trace of his presence and ignites in us a desire for him. As St. Augustine wrote in his Confessions: “Through him you sought us when we were not seeking you, but you sought us that we might begin to seek you.””

May our hearts continue to burn as we continue to seek Christ on the road to Emmaus. May we continue to encounter the risen Christ in our daily lives and realise that our humanity only makes sense when we fully comprehend the risen Lord’s act of redemption through His death on the cross and His resurrection on the third day. Hence, we need to open the Scriptures and as David the prophet teaches us, “My eyes are awake through the *night* watches, That I may meditate on Your word.” (Psalm 119:148) It is only then, when we will know the Lord and be able to rejoice in His glorious resurrection.

We pray for our holy father, His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark that the Lord may protect him to shepherd his flock in peace. We ask the risen Christ to bestow His joy and peace upon the world.

Pi Ekhrastos Aftonf! Khen Ou Meth Mi Aftonf! Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen! I pray that this joyous Feast will bring joy and comfort to each of your hearts.

Be absolved through the Holy Spirit.

Suriel

Servant of the Christ-loving Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions