



## Bishop's Easter Message

### **We are the Easter People: The Lord is Risen!!**

*"...The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!...  
and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread"  
(Luke 24:34,35)*

The Easter Story always strikes us as a strange and mysterious event in the life of Jesus even for those of us whose faith is rooted and grounded in the resurrection of Jesus. This grand event is celebrated throughout the history of the Church in a spirit of overwhelming joy and happiness. In contrast to the first Easter which was observed with a confused and frenetic response by anxious, frightened and disoriented people trying to make sense of the Good News, "He is not here, but has risen" (Luke 24:6)

As dramatically confusing as that day was for the first Christians, the early believers were still poised enough to grasp the essence of its message. The simple message of the resurrection moved them then, and us now, beyond our doubts, our fears, and our hesitation at believing the reality and purposefulness of God's work in our lives and in our world. The dawn of this new day reveals the unspeakable testament of God's love and desire to share life with us. A love that refuses to be constrained by a tomb.

God's greatest act was to become human, to live and die, so that sin and suffering were and are defeated and Jesus reigns sovereign as Lord and Savior. This is what God chose to reveal in the mightiest sign of all - a sign of God's commitment, God's willingness to be present to us in all circumstances. It is the energy and inspiration behind God's power to transform without force but through personal sacrifice.

What does this image present for the Church in our season and time? On this day, it is through God's grace that we can exit the tunnels of pain and poor financial conditions. On this day, it is through God's grace that we can look out and see if the storm is over, and release some of the anger inside. On this day, through God's grace, we can renew again the belief in the goodness of God and God's creation. On this day, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ we must resolve to walk by faith confidently out of the darkness and into the light. On this day, we know that beyond chaos there is new hope and the breath of fresher air and new opportunities with greater prospects for the future. On this day we all are given the permission to rise again and believe in self and others as

Christ our Savior believes in us. The darkness of a tomb has been transformed into the most gloriously magnificent light - “the new beginnings of God’s amazing grace which claims us”.

Easter is also a visible reminder that when we allow the Spirit the opportunity to breathe through the cracks of our broken lives, how much more are we able to enjoy healing, restoration, reconciliation and new reasons to live again and prosper as individuals and as a community of faith. I encourage the light of Easter to be felt in every corner where any semblance of darkness is found.

If Christ has risen, it is possible to look with hope at every event of our existence, even the most difficult ones, those charged with anguish and uncertainty. This is the Easter message that we are called to proclaim with words, and above all through the witness of life. May this news resound in our homes and in our hearts: “Christ, my hope, has arisen!”. May this certainty strengthen the faith of every baptized person and above all, encourage those who are facing greater suffering and difficulty! As I mentioned in my 2024 Easter message, “may Christians resist the temptation to be *functionary atheists*, that is, to say we believe in Jesus and yet don’t trust him to ‘show up!’”

Christ is the Lord risen today! May we all take this as a sign of personal victory and go forward renewed and re-energized. Boldly and proudly lifting high the banner of the risen Christ whose love has conquered all pain and sorrow with the gift of spiritual freedom. **He is Risen! He is Risen! The Lord is Risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen!!**

My beloved, may God grant you a very happy and joyful Easter!

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