



Dear parishioners,

“This is the day the Lord has made, “let us rejoice and be glad” (*Psalm 118:24*). Alleluia. The Lord is risen. For us Christians, there is no greater feast than Easter Sunday! Death and sin no longer have the ultimate power over us. Light overcomes darkness, peace calms down our fears, hope in Christ destroys despair and grief. Love, that is, the love of God that raises up or brings about new life

This is certainly good and joyful news for us as we continue to make our way through this worldwide pandemic. We have the assurance that Christ is alive; He is with us while we are learning ways of being together while trying to stay physically apart. This pandemic affects all aspects of our lives, including the ways, the moments, the places where we worship and pray.

Yet, even as we go through these seemingly endless dark, uncertain times, we see the seeds, the signs of new life bursting and growing forth, signs of new life and hope that are spreading around us locally and globally. Signs that Christ is alive teaching us, consoling us, transforming us, purifying us, saving us. A parishioner sent me a greeting card with these words: “God reminds us all of His presence each day through the beauty of His creation. Seeing the new buds of flowers blooming, trees awakening from their winter sleep and the sweet sounds of birds chirping. These are all signs from God not to give up hope ...” So many inspiring words, messages images, pictures are spread through social media. We are using the extent, the speed, the accessibility, the reach of the internet to spread positivity, good humor, moral goodness instead of the havoc caused by fake news, lies, deceit, pornography, rumors, fears.

Moments of rediscoveries of the value and joy as married couples spending more time with each other, with their children, their pets – doing things together. You resorted back or started new hobbies or use your talents: gardening, cooking, baking, home-improvement skills etc. One picture which really made me smile is that of a grandniece and her brother preparing the dough to bake some cookies. I had never seen them before doing that together in my visits to their grandma's house, my sister's home, in California.

This time of social distancing makes us to **be aware and to be more thankful**: to health workers sacrificing even risking their safety to help cure the sick; to those who stack up shelves with things we need at the grocery stores; to those small business owners that still provide some jobs for their workers through take out, curb side and delivery of food and drink we consume. Teachers, catechists who send out online classes and resources for their students to continue learning; to clergy and parish staff members who provide online spiritual resources and livestream Masses and homilies to their faith communities; to many more, who unknown to us, run errands for the elderly and the vulnerable members of our communities. All of these and many more activities affirm our faith in a living God who loves and cares for all.

With our renewed faith in the Risen Lord let us continue to transform our families into a domestic church, our homes as places of prayer and worship, our social media resources as ways to spread messages of joy, inspiration, encouragement, laughter, unity, forgiveness, kindness, peace.

Mary, Peter, Paul, John, were first in proclaiming and witnessing to the Risen Lord. They saw and they believed. **They invite us to consider our own life as a Gospel, Good News** to be shared. Peter experienced forgiveness because he chose to believe in Jesus, and this brought him peace. Peter is no longer defined by his past and has no fear about the future. So are we. That is the Good News we cannot keep to ourselves!

Happy Easter everyone!

-Fr. Danny Ramos