



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

RESPONDING JOYFULLY TO CHRIST'S CALL TO BECOME PEOPLE OF GOD

Easter 2020

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It has been called the “unseen enemy.” The coronavirus has brought illness and death to the afflicted; fear, isolation and disruption to us all.

On Easter Sunday, Jesus’ first followers saw the remedy for their fears. Days before, beginning with the arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane and His Crucifixion on Calvary, they had experienced fear and seen death. Indeed, the threat of death caused not only fear but isolation and disruption as they ran from Jesus in the garden and nearly all abandoned Him at the Cross.

But on Easter Sunday He was there again, in their midst, back from the dead, bringing them together and reassuring them with His words, “peace be with you.” Today he says the same to us. He is present to us. We do not see Him with our eyes. □ But with faith we know Him to be among us, risen and triumphant. He is the unseen ally, always present, always able to help us against all enemies, seen and unseen.

The presence of the coronavirus has and will shape our lives for a time. Even more so, may the presence of the Risen Christ at all times shape our lives, our outlook and our confidence.

Scientists work to develop a vaccine to prevent further infections of our bodies from viruses around us. We pray for those scientists and heed their sound advice. Jesus Christ is the complementary antidote for our souls to strengthen us spiritually against all the inevitable things in life that we face and fear - sickness, isolation, sin, uncertainty and even death.

While this is a very different Easter, in its essence it is the same. *How* we celebrate differs but *what* we celebrate and its meaning for us remain the same. May the Triumph of the Risen Christ give you and your loved one’s peace, hope and confidence. I pray that God will protect you and your loved ones along with all who strive to maintain public health, order, and the necessities of life. May it be God’s will that before this Easter Season is over, we will be through the worst of this pandemic so that we can gather again, stronger in faith, united in Christ, to give joyful thanks to God around the altar in the Eucharist.

With every prayerful best wish for a joyous Easter, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus  
Bishop of Worcester