



A message to the faithful of the archdiocese from Archbishop Michael Jackels

1 April 2021, 9:00 AM

Happy Easter

Didn't you hope we'd sing Alleluia this Easter, inspired by the end of the pandemic? I did, but that hope was left bruised and bloodied, like the Huskers facing the Hawkeyes.

The pandemic has perhaps left us feeling like Jesus' first followers after Good Friday - still fraught with fear and sunk in sadness.

Those first followers of Jesus didn't understand that the Messiah had to suffer and die, or that he would rise from the dead; I mean, who would, who could understand that?

Eventually, they learned the important lessons of Jesus' empty tomb, his burial cloths left behind, his entering through locked doors - suffering is not futile, death is not final.

That Easter message can help us with the pandemic. We may be horrified to hear that suffering isn't futile, that it plays an important role in enriching our human experience.

How do we know sweet without tasting sorrow? Suffering cultivates growth in humility, empathy, kindness, and compassion. It can make us bitter or better, but we decide.

And if we believe that death isn't final, then neither is death-dealing coronavirus; it will end, and post-pandemic life will be different, and even better, like Heaven.

We believe Heaven is living in perfect union with God. We enjoy an imperfect union now, but in Heaven it'll be complete, like rain and ocean, breath and air.

Then we will experience the quieting our desiring, when all the good things we hanker after are satisfied all at once, completely, and forever.

That's because the good things we desire have their origin and fulness in God; if you crave a Hostess Ho-Ho, it's really God you desire, who is the essence of Ho-Ho-ness.

From that quieting of desiring flows eternal peace or rest (grant unto us, O Lord), which in its turn bears the fruit of a sublime bliss that is too much for words.

So, in preparation for the happy day of Heaven, and even to hasten it's coming, say your prayers, worship at Sunday Mass, witness to the Gospel, and share with the poor.

And in preparation for the happy end of the pandemic, and even to hasten it, wash your hands, wear a mask, practice social distancing, and get vaccinated, please.

The resurrection of Jesus, the promise of eternal life, and the end of the pandemic inspires us to sing Alleluia because suffering isn't futile, and death isn't final.

Happy Easter!

Michael Jackels
Archbishop of Dubuque