

FATHER MAC'S EASTER LETTER 2020

This is an Easter like none we've ever experienced. Sadly, it us a time of sickness, death, and economic chaos; a time when ordinary patterns of human interaction – even the patterns of worship of God – have all been disrupted by the global coronavirus pandemic. It is as if the whole human family has entered a boat together, sailing through an unpredicted storm, on an ocean that was already deep and dangerous and seems to have no boundaries. Pope Francis pointed this out several weeks ago when, standing on the steps of the Vatican overlooking an empty St. Peter's Square, he granted the special blessing to the "city and the world." We are a people lost at sea. Where can we look for meaning and consolation in this frightening and uncertain time?

We can look to Jesus Christ. Though we are navigating through stormy waters right now, Jesus is in the boat with us and he promises to lead us safely to the heavenly shore. The passion, death, and Resurrection of Our Lord remind us that God has not abandoned us. God loves us so much he was willing to sacrifice His only Son and by willingly undergoing his passion, Jesus has won our salvation! Through his death and Resurrection, the Lord Jesus has destroyed the power of sin and death and brought us into His life and won for us victory over the grave.

The Church in her wisdom asks us to keep the Easter feast alive for fifty days. We need to reflect on this and just how much our Lord loves us. Easter is much more than flowers, cards, Easter eggs, candy, beautiful music, or even Easter Sunday Mass, which we are deprived of this year. Easter is the definitive historical event that gives ultimate meaning and purpose to our lives. Because Jesus died and rose from the dead, we no longer have to fear sin and death. The victory has already been won in Christ. We celebrate Jesus, our Paschal Lamb who died out of sheer love for us.

Easter is the ultimate reality. At whatever point we are in creation history, the mystery we celebrate in Easter is what (finally) IS. Easter promises those who have entered the waters of baptism the ultimate outcome of victory if we choose to believe and live in God's Reign on earth, as it is in Heaven. Jesus challenges us to not be afraid. In the end, even COVID-19 is subordinate to the will and plans of the Father. The waters of chaos, filled with the Breath of God, have become the waters of baptismal life through the death and resurrection of the God/human, Jesus the Christ.

It might feel like Good Friday is lasting a little longer this year as our world continues to walk the painful way of the cross of this pandemic, but this crisis will pass. There will be an Easter ahead! I pray that this most unusual Easter season will be a time of renewed personal encounter with Our Risen Lord for you and your family that will give you hope and encouragement during this difficult time. Easter is not cancelled! Jesus has emerged from the tomb and soon, so will we. He is Risen. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Happy Easter!

Father Mac