

## Archbishop's 2020 Easter Message

*It was evening on the day Jesus rose from the dead, the first day of the week,  
and the doors of the house where the disciples had met  
were locked for fear of the authorities.*

*Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."*

*After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side.*

*Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.*

(John 20:19-20)

Dear People of the Archdiocese of St. John's,

Like the disciples of that first Easter, many of us are spending this Easter "self-isolated" in our homes. In our case, not for fear of the authorities, but rather for fear of the Coronavirus and in respect of the authorities' advice on how best to combat it. The Risen Lord's message to us today is the same as his message to the disciples then: "Peace be with you."

The peace that Jesus offered his disciples, and offers to us, is not the easy peace of a life of security and privilege. Rather, it is a peace that comes from being willing to put our trust in him while living amidst the trials and uncertainties of our times. As the Risen Lord instructed his disciples then, so too now he invites us to proclaim the good news that he has conquered sin and death.

In his 2020 Holy Week message, Pope Francis offers advice on how we might proclaim this good news in our present situation: *"Let us try, if we can, to make the best use of this time: let us be generous. Let us help those in need in our neighborhood. Let us look out for the loneliest people, perhaps by telephone or social networks. Let us pray to the Lord for those who are in difficulty in Italy and in the world."* And, as Pope Francis has insisted so many times, all that we do, we should do with love and resurrection joy!

I think St. Augustine articulated well in one of his sermons the call to resurrection joy in the midst of trials: *"Let us sing alleluia here on earth, while we still live in anxiety, so that we may sing it one day in heaven in full security. ... let us sing now, not in order to enjoy a life of leisure, but in order to lighten our labors. You should sing as wayfarers do – sing, but continue your journey. Do not be lazy, but sing to make your journey more enjoyable. Sing, but keep going."*

As we "keep going" during the challenging days and weeks ahead, please join with me in praying that we may do so as true, faith filled followers of the Resurrected Christ, with alleluias on our lips, joy in our hearts and his peace shining forth in all we say and do!

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

+Peter Hundt

Archbishop of St. John's, NL