

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord – April 12, 2020

REFLECTION ON THE EASTER TO REMEMBER MARKED WITH A HUGE DIFFERENCE:

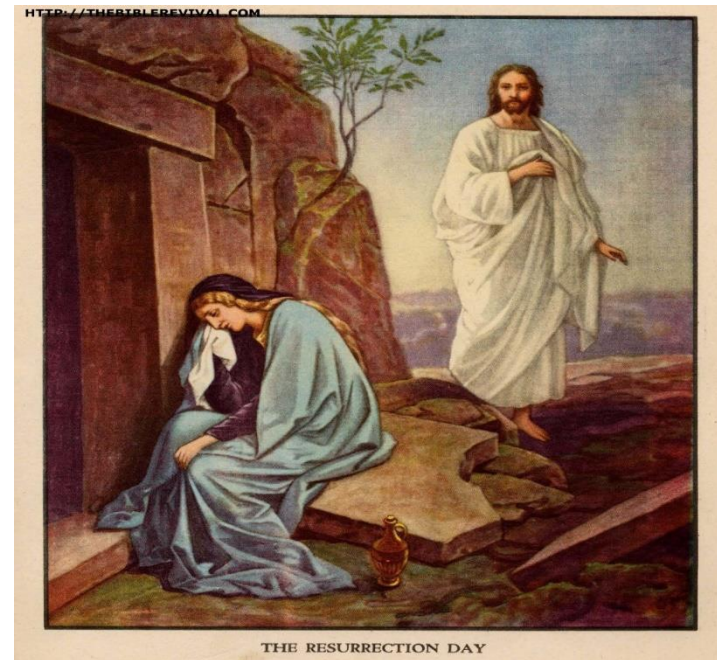
Once again, we join Christians all over the world to mark the celebration of our Lord's resurrection at Easter though in a totally different way and manner this year.

The three days of Holy Triduum leading to Easter remain for us the most solemn days of our liturgical calendar when we gather for the Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday celebrations. But this year has been different as we couldn't gather as usual, which will remain for a very long time a lifetime experience for us and yet we have been united in our faith and hope in the triumph of the Risen Lord.

The Easter message therefore lies at the centre of our Christian faith and life since at Easter we celebrate our reason for being Christians and believers. As St Paul puts it, "if Christ has not been raised, then empty is our preaching, empty too, your faith in Christ Jesus." (1 Cor.15: 14)

We remain joyful for obvious reasons despite our present struggles and sufferings because at Easter we not only celebrate that Christ has made good his promise of rising from the dead, but we also shout the great ALLELUIA that sin and death have been conquered for good and so the triumph of life over death, light over darkness, truth over falsehood, goodness over evil, health and well-being over

sickness and disease. For as the prophet Isaiah puts it "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)



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The powerful message of Easter is that of a renewed life, hope and strength in the face of all the pain and struggles of life; although for most of us this year's Easter will go down in our history books as an Easter that was marked with a difference, not to be forgotten in a hurry.

Our faith is our strength, knowing that although we could not gather as usual this year for our Holy Week and Easter celebrations due to social distancing and the need to isolate given the COVID-19 pandemic, distance is never a barrier before God. In our homes we have watched and followed the celebrations on the TV and internet and God has been with us blessing us and bringing us peace and comfort. As Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II rightly said in her very timely broadcast recently, this period of the COVID-19 pandemic has offered us the opportunity to slow down our speed in order to reflect in prayer and meditation and if we remain united and resolute we will surely overcome this period as we have done before and when we succeed in this, the success will be for everyone. (April 5, 2020)

Therefore, while we continue to keep the sick and most vulnerable and those who have been affected by this pandemic close to our hearts, we have every reason to rejoice and celebrate - though not in our Churches but in our hearts, lives and homes - in the knowledge that our sins have been washed away, death has been conquered and the price we owe has been paid for us with salvation won. We surely know that this situation shall also pass us by and then we shall once again

gather to worship and celebrate our faith and hope in the Risen Lord.

As we go through this time of trial, may our prayers and the efforts of those on the frontline, especially healthcare professionals, be a source of strength and encouragement for all of us to remain positive and resolute. May they also enable us to continue to navigate through these rough and uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Being united in prayer gives us strength and hope and speaks to our common humanity that we are not alone and are together in all of this and assures us that the good Lord is with us every step of the way.

As we mark this special Easter that will surely go down in history, let us continue to remain united in our faith that God's love will always be greater than anything that may afflict us. Happy Easter and may the light of the Risen Lord continue to shine upon us, Amen! – **Fr. Gordian Okpuruka**

PRAYER REQUEST FOR ALL OUR SICK PARISHIONERS:

In this time of need and trial, the Holy Father Pope Francis has continued to call and encourage each of us to remain steadfast in prayer and supplication to God for all the sick persons amongst us especially those affected by the COVID-19 and for the whole world.

In praying the Rosary, prayerful reading of Sacred Scripture and other devotions especially during this time, may we continue to pray for all the sick people especially our

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parishioners who are sick and for all the sick and lonely people around the world, for all our healthcare practitioners and those who look after the sick; May we continue to remember in a special way:

Don Woodham, Wayne Robinson, Maverick Southern, Margaret Morris, Defina Segatti, Felix Kozak, Argene Pellegrini, Tom Wunder, Kaelynn Heines, and family and friends.

May Our Blessed Mother Mary, Health of the sick intercede for us and may our Lord Jesus Christ who took all our suffering to the cross of Calvary as our healer and saviour heal the sick and our world from all ailment and disease today and always, Amen!



WELLINGTON FOOD BANK DONATIONS:

The St. Mary's CWL continues its year-long campaign on behalf of the Wellington Food Bank.

As we have done in previous months, in consultation with the Food Bank and because of the times we are in, the times of social distancing and self-isolation, we are no longer able to collect items at the Church as we have always done. We have, therefore, made alternate arrangements for the collection of foodstuffs, as noted following.

Items of need for the month of April include:

- Boxed mac and cheese (any brand)
- Hamburger Helper
- Hamburger Tuna Helper
- Pasta side-dishes such as Sidekicks or other brands
- Crackers
- Canned Fruit

As noted above and due to the challenging times in which we find ourselves, **collection of items is as follows:** Please leave any donations at the end of the driveway of the Kraemers' at:

0257 South River Road, Elora.

A marked white bin will be available throughout the day at the end of the driveway for the collection of items, which will be delivered to the Food Bank throughout the month. Your generosity, as always, is so very much appreciated!

APPRECIATION:

I wish to thank all our parishioners and especially those who helped us out during the season of Lent, leading up to Easter before the COVID-19 crisis.

Thank you to all our Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers and decorators. Special thanks to Michael Madden for sharing his gifts with us and all those who helped us to decorate our house of worship. We are thankful. May the good Lord continue to bless us and keep us in His everlasting love and peace, Amen.