



## **An Easter Message**

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The Message of Easter is the celebration of life over death, of hope over despair, of offers of assurance in situations of vulnerability. The scriptures attest to how the resurrected Christ awakened faith. They tell of how He awakened new hope and new understanding in the disciples and then entrusted them to be courageous messengers of this Easter hope. His risen presence gave them new purpose and a new identity.

From the moment of that first Easter morning, across the centuries, Christians have celebrated the Risen Christ and joyfully proclaimed a message of hope and new life.

This is our history, our mission and our legacy. The Risen Christ also calls us to be messengers of an Easter vision in our personal circumstances, in our time and in our world.

In the Jewish religious tradition, during the meal of Passover, the youngest child asks a series of questions as they try to make sense of this ritual meal. Remembering and recalling the events of the past and responding to these inquiries, the Jewish parent helps the child to understand the significance of this traditional celebration. This dialogue between generations therefore becomes an opportunity to share and to pass on faith and meaning.

Within our Christian homes this Easter, conversation between children and parents also presents opportunities to share and to pass on faith and hope.

We all need to hear the Easter message again. With each gift of newborn life, God imparts an opportunity to hear the message of Easter anew. Generations of young people are entrusted with taking up the mission and there are seedlings of growth sprouting anew in our parishes and Pastoral Communities. The synodal pathway started by Pope Francis presents such an opportunity for us all. It is an opportunity to give new vitality to our own involvement in our faith communities and so grow our understanding that we all shape the life and experience of the Church.

As in the past, there are indeed many challenges to face. The years of the pandemic have had an impact on our pastoral communities and faith practice and it is as if we are all emerging from the tomb into the light of a new dawn.

In our world, hatred and violence continues to live in the hearts of many. Death and Resurrection is a tangible reality in countries of crisis and conflict. The joyful message of Easter this year is obscured by scenes of death and destruction and the forced displacement of families from their homes in Ukraine and other war-stricken regions across the world. Yet many others are peacemakers who have arisen to offer support as these families arrive to our shores seeking safety.

May this Easter time be an opportunity for us all, with renewed vision and hope, to take up again Christ's Mission to be messengers of life over death, of hope over despair, of offers of assurance in situations of vulnerability and as Easter people to act as peacemakers.