Diocese of Fall River

Office of the Bishop

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.

Bishop da Cunha's Easter Message
2022

Dear Friends in Christ,

"Yes, Christ my hope is arisen..." With these powerful words sung in the Easter Sequence at Mass, we proclaim the Good News of Easter: that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who took up His cross and died for our salvation, has been raised from the dead. This is, indeed, the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad (Psalm 118).

We have reached this most joyful celebration after the hardship of Lent and in the midst of a waning—we pray—two-year-long pandemic that has impacted all our lives. We have made the sacrifices; we have endured the losses; we have lived the sorrow. And now, with the Risen Jesus, let us put aside our worries and fears, living as St. Paul reminds us, with *"no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God"* (Phil: 4:4-6).

Now at Easter, in the Resurrection of Jesus, we find our true hope and joy. In his suffering, Jesus was not defeated but proved victorious. God raised Him to new life, turning darkness to light, despair to hope, and suffering to glory.

This verse sung in the *Exsultet* at the Easter Vigil reminds us that we all share in the joy of the Resurrection:

> *Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her, ablaze with light from her eternal King, let all corners of the earth be glad, knowing an end to gloom and darkness.*

Jesus, raised from the dead just as He promised, offers salvation to all who follow Him. This victory is our hope and joy at Easter. We are called to embrace and live in this joy. Spring forth in this hope, and as Pope Francis encourages, *"The Lord asks us from His cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look towards those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame (cf. Is 42:3) that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled."* (Pope Francis – Prayer Service, March 27, 2020)

Budding trees, emerging perennials, and greening lawns are sure signs of spring. And just as nature is renewed each spring, so too should we renew our lives at Easter. Let us work to let go of any sinful ways, of old grudges that separate us from loved ones, of an apathetic faith. Let us make Jesus the center of our lives and reflect that in our interactions with all whom we encounter.

Please be assured of my blessings for you and your family, and may we experience the peace of the risen Christ in our hearts.

My prayers and best wishes for a blessed Easter to all of you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V.
Bishop of Fall River

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