



BISHOP OF HAMILTON

EASTER MESSAGE 2022

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

We will soon celebrate Easter, the high point of our liturgical year. As Spring breaks in around us, we marvel at the almost magical appearance of new life pushing up through the ground and out of the branches in the trees. The birds sing as they build nests and prepare to lay eggs and welcome new life!

Throughout the season of Lent we were horrified by the shocking death and destruction of the war in Ukraine. The remarkable courage of the Ukrainian leader, the brave soldiers, and the committed citizens have given us heart and hope that they might actually succeed in saving their homeland.

The Delegation of Indigenous First Nations, Inuit, and Metis representatives to The Vatican to meet with Pope Francis also lifted our hearts and gave us fresh hope that a new relationship is possible. The possibility of a Papal visit to the Indigenous peoples at Lac Ste. Anne, Alberta, provides us more opportunity for such hope.

We celebrate our greatest hope at Easter – the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The Resurrection is for us an eternal wellspring of hope. No matter how dark, how desperate, how impossible a situation we find ourselves in – if we look to the Lord who has conquered even death, there is always reason for hope.

Easter reminds us that even death does not have the final say. *“Where He has gone, we hope to follow!”* As I get older, I know more and more people who have made that journey. I think of them and pray for them especially during the Easter season.

I pray for you sisters and brothers in Christ, for you our Parish Priests, in gratitude for your faithful, creative, and generous service especially during these past two difficult years; for the Parish Secretaries, Pastoral Workers, and volunteers who make our Parishes places of hope and joy; and for all those who long for our prayers – that they too may experience the healing love of the Lord.

Happy Easter, my friends. Pray for Pope Francis – he always asks us to do so. And pray for me!

Sincerely in the Risen Christ,

+ Douglas Crosby, OMI
(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI
Bishop of Hamilton.

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Message for Easter 2022
by Bishop Raymond Poisson,
Bishop of Saint-Jérôme and of Mont-Laurier and
president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

As the Church in Canada, we have just lived through a particularly remarkable week: in faithfulness to its mission, however imperfectly, our Church is working within itself and around itself towards reconciliation, for the building of a better world. It is doing so by following the vital path of self-examination: through an honest scrutiny of its recent history, the Church in Canada has become aware of its mistakes and, above all, of her existential need to be saved by Christ. I refer, of course, to the meetings between our sisters and brothers from the Indigenous Peoples and the Holy Father, joined in turn by representatives of the Bishops of Canada; an experience of salvation that has been in the works for a long time, and is the first fruits of a future to continue to build.

There is a strength here which is mercy for some and hope for others, both animated by a single desire: to live together in the way God's plan calls us to do.

As the Church in the world, the members of this great ecclesial body suffer on account of war; to be honest, in many places in the world, members suffer from injustices, from violence and insecurity. This year in particular, however, events in especially critical areas like Ukraine and Russia are bringing suffering to the whole body. It is as if, all at once, mercy, hope, and a life together have become challenges beyond our reach. Yet, Holy Week only has meaning when it culminates in Easter. We must witness to this reality.

There is an equilibrium to be found here, between the sufferings of the Passion and the joy of the Resurrection. Our joy is all the greater because the suffering is real. Hope has this driving power, one which inhabits faith, which is then manifested as charity. In this way, God's plan, "a life together", becomes possible again.

In the life of each one of us, there are moments of difficulty and moments of well-being. God does not call us out of this world of constant tension; rather it is within this world that we are invited to witness to reconciliation and peace. Let us all hope that we may be worthy to bear witness to Easter following the Passion, for the glory of God and the salvation of the world!

Glory to the Risen Christ!

Easter 2022