



Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants

Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church

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EASTER MESSAGE - 2014

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus,

The Risen Lord who appeared to his disciples greeted them with the words, “Peace be with you!” It was his ‘message’ and gift to his disciples. Peace and Joy is the message of Easter for each one of us too from the Risen Lord. In the name of the Risen Lord, I wish you the ‘peace and joy of the Easter’.

“**Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus,**” exhorts Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel* (EG: 3). We are living in an age where the society promises various ways and means of finding happiness and success in life and many people are after them. In the busy schedule of one’s life, one may overlook the Christian call to true joy and lasting peace, which is never the gift of the world, but of God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Easter conveys the message that the victory of sin is momentary and the lasting victory is of truth and it comes from God. The feast of resurrection should motivate us to forsake our worldly ways of finding happiness in life and to renew our commitment to the Lord, which we began at our baptism. If our life is centered around the things of this world, we can never get access to the peace and joy of the Risen Lord.

“**Don’t be afraid,**” Jesus told his disciples as well as the women who bore witness to his resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus gave joy to many in the Gospel: to Mary Magdalene who stood weeping outside the tomb of our Lord (Jn. 20: 11- 18), to the disciples who went to Emmaus (Lk. 24: 13-34), to the disciples who were fishing the whole night without any fish, (Jn. 21: 1-14), etc. We remain in fears and worries of life, when we are unaware that there is a God who loves us and cares for us. The presence of the Risen Lord removes our fears and worries of life.

Today we should find the Risen Lord, primarily in the Word of God, in the Sacraments and in the Church. If we seek Jesus in his most earthly form or in the physical form, we are sure to miss him. Mary Magdalene recognized Jesus, when he *spoke* to her. The disciples at Emmaus recognized him in the breaking of the bread, symbolizing the Eucharist and the sacraments, and the disciples who were fishing recognized him when they saw the net with 153 fishes, symbolizing the Church. Thus the feast of Easter invites us to read the Word of God and to participate in the celebration of the Sacraments and to live an ecclesial life of communion and sharing.

Our Church is built on St. Thomas apostolic faith and unique experience of the Risen Lord. It is our responsibility to deepen our faith and share it with others around us. This sharing begins at home and extends to our work places and other places of coming together. This sharing is a bearing witness to the Risen Lord and is born out of our personal encounter with him.

Wishing you once again the Joy and Peace of the Risen Lord and inviting you all to share the Easter Joy and Peace to all your near and dear ones, I remain.

Yours in our Lord,

Bishop Sebastian Vadakel
Chairman, the Syro-Malabar Commission for Evangelization and Pastoral Care of the Migrants



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