



Easter Message 2026

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

As we once again enter into the sacred mystery of Easter, our hearts turn to the profound truth at the very centre of our faith: that Jesus Christ, crucified and buried, has truly risen from the dead.

In Him, the power of sin and death has been broken, and a new and unheard-of hope has been planted deep within us: death is not the end, for life – life in Christ – is more powerful than death, just as love - Christ's love in us - is more powerful than hatred, vengeance and violence.

In these times of global uncertainty — marked by international political tensions, conflicts that seem to continue without end, and economic pressures that weigh heavily on many families and individuals — the Easter message resonates with a promise that there is a better way – a way that the world urgently needs – a way that calls for courage, for constancy and ultimately for a community which puts its faith not primarily in itself but in the God without whom all our efforts for peace, for reconciliation, for harmony and for mutual respect will come to nothing: for it is God who is Father of us all and it is in God that we recognise that we are, in spite of the many differences which exist among us, all brothers and sisters, members together of the one human family.

Sadly, we do not always live out this truth in practice, and nor do we live in a society which readily acknowledges the truth of what we proclaim. We know, because we see it every day, that we live in a broken, fragile world. Here in our own corner of the world, we see in our cities, our suburbs and rural communities the very real struggles of people striving to make ends meet amid the rising cost of living, the shortage of housing, and the burdens of illness and isolation. Families struggle to hold themselves together, often feeling adrift in a society in which the “old values” on which they have



built their lives and in which they have sought to raise their children, are constantly being questioned and even undermined. It is not surprising that so many of us find ourselves wrestling with fear, discouragement and fatigue.

But at this time, as we celebrate Easter together, we – like the early disciples who stood bewildered at the empty tomb – are invited to encounter the Risen Christ who says to each of us: *“Do not be afraid.”*

As I reflect on this Easter call to courage and to trust in the Lord, I am reminded of another time when the words *“Do not be afraid”* were heard in the gospel story. They are the words which the Angel Gabriel spoke to Mary at the Annunciation. It is significant, I think, that the message of trust and freedom from fear opened the story of Jesus and, in a sense, closes the story as well.

The Gospel of Saint Luke tells us that when the angel appeared and spoke to Mary she was *“deeply disturbed”*. The angel says to her *“Do not be afraid Mary – you have found favour with God”*. But as the angel goes on to explain what God is asking of her, Mary moves from fear to confusion: *how can this all come about, she wonders, as I am not married.?”* The angel then makes her a promise: *the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High God will cover you with its shadow”*. It is as if God is telling her that she does not have to rely on herself alone – God will be with her every step of the way. And because Mary, as a woman of faith, believes this promise she is able to say *“Here I am, the Lord’s servant. Let God’s will be done in my life”*.

Mary’s experience, and her example, are not distant history for us; they speak directly into our own reality. Like Mary, we are called to be people who hold fast to God’s promise, even when the challenges before us seem insurmountable; people who know that courage is not the absence of fear but is, rather, an attitude of trust in God who never abandons us. It was this faith that enabled Mary to stand at the foot of the cross as her son died. It is what will enable us to hold firm in the midst of the many “Calvarys” on which we will find ourselves standing throughout our lives.

The Easter proclamation — *Christ is risen!* — invites us to embrace this same trust, to let go of our fear, and to proclaim, as Saint Paul once did, *“With God on our side who can be against us? (Rom 8:31).*



Easter trust is not blind. It acknowledges the hardships in our world: the pain of the death of loved ones, the suffering of illness or infirmity; the anxiety and even desperation of financial strain; the fear of conflict and violence; and the distress caused by broken dreams and unfulfilled hopes.

Easter trust is rooted in the certainty that the Risen Lord walks with us even in the darkest valleys: that his Holy Spirit does rest upon us and that his power does overshadow us and accompany us. God was with Mary in all the struggles of her life, even to the foot of the cross. God did not abandon Mary: God does not and will not abandon us.

Easter trust also implies an Easter mission. Before the Lord returned to His Father in heaven, He sent His disciples out to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel. Just as the angel's promise to Mary was a promise also to us, so the command of Jesus to His first disciples is also a command to us. As Saint James reminds us in his letter,

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill’, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead (James 2:14-17).

The Lord seeks to fulfil His promises through His Body, which is the Church. And as Saint Theresa of Avila has so famously said,

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.*

In the Resurrection, we find both personal consolation and our mission — to be the presence of Christ to others in every way we can. As we celebrate Easter this year, I encourage all of us to look for the ways in which, in our own local circumstances, we can be Christ to each other, and to those around us who are most in need.



May this Easter fill your hearts with the joy of the Risen Lord and deepen your confidence in His abiding presence.

A happy and holy Easter to you all.

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