



*Diocese of Fall River*  
*Office of the Bishop*  
*Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.*

*"If Christ has not been raised, then empty is our preaching; empty, too, your faith"*  
*(I Cor. 15:14).*

Thanks be to God for Easter! We need the light, the joy, the Spirit of the Risen Lord to help us move forward in faith and hope. When we look at the world around us and see violence, discrimination, division, injustice, we may be discouraged by all these evils and the bad news all around us every day. We may be disappointed by the failings of our leaders, both civil and ecclesiastical; we may also be discouraged by the lack of commitment to the faith on the part of many people, especially the younger generation; we may be saddened by an alarming number who increasingly say that they no longer need to go to church or believe in God or feel the need to practice any religion; we may be disheartened by the suffering around us, maybe in our own lives or in our families and neighbors. In the midst of all these negative aspects of our imperfect world, we may lose sight of what God has done and continues doing for us. And so, it is the Resurrection of Jesus that gives us hope.

We may be discouraged by the prospect of a future where planet Earth, our common home, and all the natural resources in it, may be threatened and not readily available for future generations resulting in an unhealthy living environment. We may be discouraged by a political system that fosters division in our own country; we may feel discouraged by the number of people who are losing their homes, are forced to flee their countries, causing family separation due to violence, war, poverty and political turmoil; people who have become refugees or unwelcome migrants. In the midst of all these evils we may still find reason for hope because Jesus rose from the dead.

We may be saddened by the closing of our beloved churches, changes in our neighborhoods, the increasing number of deaths by young people from opioid overdose, but in the midst of all this we still can find joy because Jesus rose from the dead.

The Resurrection of Jesus impacts everything we say, everything we do and the way we live. It reminds us that Jesus is the Son of God, our Messiah and Savior. It makes Him credible, because everything He said and promised came true. Let us listen to the witnesses of the Resurrection: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter and Mary Magdalene. Let them remind us of what Easter is about.

Easter is an invitation for all of us to pass from darkness to light, from despair to hope, from sin to grace, from slavery to freedom. In the midst of anxieties, fears, disillusionments and disappointments, we can find courage because Jesus rose from the dead. My hope and prayer for all of you this Easter is that our faith in the Resurrection of Jesus will be as strong and as real as the Apostles experienced and proclaimed.

*"If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all"*  
*(I Cor. 15:19).*

Sincerely yours in Christ

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