



Office of the Bishop

25 March 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the Lord!

Very soon we will be able to say with exultant hearts and voices: *"Christ is Risen. He is truly risen!"* (Mt 28.5)

As we prepare for Easter, our attention focuses on the powerful Gospel accounts of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus. This is where the liturgies of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday are most poignant.

We must never forget that even with the tremendous suffering Christ endured by His Passion and Death, God's immense love for us and the whole of creation underlies it all. Nothing, no matter how grim, can ever overshadow this love, which stands out as a beacon of light from the Cross, *"Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."* (1 Cor 23-24)

While Easter will be very different again this year, we should never pull back, but rather push forward with those things that make Easter the pre-eminent celebration in our lives as Christians. This means that we should really dress up for Mass, even if we stay at home and participate via live-stream. This means that we should do those things we have always done to prepare for Easter, whether baking or cleaning, or buying fresh flowers or making a turkey dinner, and reaching out to the poor whether financially or with other kindnesses.

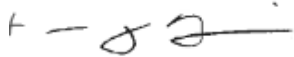
We may not be able to gather as an extended family, but consider sharing your turkey meal with those who are single and alone this Easter. We can also reach out via phone or video call or Facetime to our friends and family so that no one is forgotten this Easter. Most especially, please remember to pray for one another, our elderly, our widowed persons, the lonely and those who have no family.

I invite all of you to join the live-stream of the Chrism Mass, which will be held on Monday, March 29th at 5 pm (PDT) from Osoyoos. A link can be found on the diocesan webpage: www.nelsondiocese.org and the direct link is www.springfieldfuneralhome.ca/mass.

As we celebrate Christ's Resurrection from the dead and His triumph over sin and death this Easter, let us unite ourselves to Jesus' Resurrection, the source of our hope and our joy. It is this hope which draws our eyes upward, to God, the source of life and love, and where we want to *"appear with Him in glory."* (Col 3.4) There is no greater gift than eternal life, and to gain the Beatific Vision, and to live with God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the angels and saints in heaven along with our family and friends who have gone before us.

May God bless you and keep you safe, and shower His love upon you! Happy Easter everyone!

Sincerely in Christ our Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory J. Bittman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

✠ Gregory J Bittman
Bishop of Nelson