



**Message for Easter  
20 April 2025  
His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo  
Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

*May Jesus and Mary be in your souls.*

The greatest liturgical celebration of the Church is of course Easter. The enthusiastic and traditional greeting on Easter morning and throughout the Easter Octave is: *Christus surrexit! - Surrexit vere, allelúja* (“Christ is risen!” - “He is risen indeed, Alleluia!”) – and it fills us with a renewed sense of hope and deepened trust in the Lord Jesus, our Saviour. How can we not be overjoyed in considering that singular event of Jesus rising out of the tomb, just outside of Jerusalem and therefore, is alive today, among us, in our midst, in our hearts, in the sacraments, in his Word and in the Church! That life-giving happening of yesteryear has incredible and life-changing effects on our life, today. By his death on the Cross, we today are freed from sin, from all sin, every sin and its destructive grip on our lives. By his glorious Resurrection, we today are given new life, a new beginning, new freedom, new opportunities. And so, it is with that incomparable Easter joy that I extend my warmest greetings to you and your loved ones this Easter Sunday and throughout the Easter Season.

It really is the central solemnity - most important feast - of the Christian calendar and there is no other day that compares with it: the day we celebrate Christ’s victory over sin, death and Satan, (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 102) and which we recall and actually make present every single Sunday in our weekly celebration of the Eucharist in our parishes. Simply put, “This is the Day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” as the Psalm says so enthusiastically (Ps. 118:24). I cannot stress enough how crucial and paramount it is to participate in Holy Mass each and every Sunday. It is the weekly commemoration of Jesus’ Easter, the Pascal Mystery, the weekly occasion to renew our faith and hope, to be filled with God’s love, to build community and to pray for the needs of all. It is an encounter of grace; an opportunity we cannot miss. Let us make that effort, to celebrate in our parish communities the Eucharistic Risen Jesus who waits for us and our families with open arms every Sunday, the Lord’s Day, to draw us deeper into his Easter existence, into his newness and abundant life.

An added dimension to this Easter joy, this Easter celebration and Easter hope, is that we celebrate it in the context of the Jubilee Holy Year in which we are invited to see ourselves as *Pilgrims of Hope*. Let us prayerfully recall the words of Pope Francis which opened the Holy Year: “The death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope” (*Spes non Confundit*, 20). Our Easter faith twinned and intimately connected to Easter hope is not wishful thinking, a vague optimism, or radical escapism. Rather, it is rooted in the work and love of the Most Holy Trinity. The Holy Father continues: “Jesus experienced the drama of death. The Father’s love raised him in the power of the Spirit and made of his humanity the first fruits of our



eternal salvation” (*Spes non Confundit*, 20). Central to our Paschal proclamation are the words of the Easter Preface, “For he is the true Lamb who has taken away the sins of the world; by dying, he has destroyed our death, and by rising restored our life” (*Roman Missal*, Easter Preface I). These two aspects of the Paschal mystery—Jesus’ death and resurrection—inform our hope and transform our lives forever making the life of grace available to us (cf. *CCC*, 654).

It is imperative for us to remember that while the Resurrection was a historical event it was and is much more, since, as a profound mystery of our living faith, the Resurrection really and ultimately transcends time and space. The *Catechism* teaches that: “Christ's Resurrection was not a return to earthly life, as was the case with the raisings from the dead that he had performed before Easter: Jairus' daughter, the young man of Naim, Lazarus... they would die again. Christ's Resurrection is essentially different. In his risen body he passes from the state of death to another life beyond time and space” (*CCC*, 646). In this way, the Resurrection is the fulfillment of our hope, the hope that corresponds to our restless hearts that long for God Himself and being in right relationship with Him, as St. Augustine intuitively phrased it (cf. St. Augustine, *Confessions*, I, i,5).

For those who have lost loved ones, hope in the Resurrection takes on a particular meaning as it points to the reality of death but one which does not have the final word. This hope of eternal life in the Kingdom brings comfort and courage to those who mourn, knowing that death has been defeated and that they too will, one day, be raised to new life in eternity. We pray with the following words in the *Preface I for the dead* during a funeral Mass: “In him the hope of blessed resurrection has dawned, that those saddened by the certainty of dying might be consoled by the promise of immortality to come”.

The unique supernatural hope that Easter brings calls us to live differently in the ‘here and now’ of our existence and earthly journey. It recalls the sacrificial, self-giving love of Jesus on the cross and looks to emulate it in our daily choices and decisions – to live the Resurrected new life of Christ in and through our relationships and in society. Our hope is never passive but transformative, bidding us to engage the world and proclaim the truth and love of God. We see this on the first Easter morning, when Our Lord asks Mary Magdalene to go to Galilee and tell the others what she had seen—the tomb is empty, and Jesus is risen from the dead (cf. Mt. 28:10). The same is true today. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ calls us to live in truth, with courage, compassion, and purpose; to go out to others – the young and young at heart - family, friends, colleagues, neighbours and strangers - and share with them the awesome difference it makes in our lives to know the Lord, to live in friendship with him, to love him and to serve him as best we can. We do this in word and deed, by our testimony and example, bringing hope wherever we find ourselves and inviting all people to the newness of life made possible by the Resurrection. Truly we believe and profess the Resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

Once again, I would like to extend my Easter wishes to you and your family and friends, to the entire Archdiocese of Toronto. May the reality of Easter be a daily experience of new life, new hope, new trust and new beginnings allowing us to savour its lasting effects - day in, day out - as we journey in this life with eyes set on the life that will have no end. Blessed Easter to you all.