



## Easter 2024

As we gather to celebrate Easter with our families and friends this year, I want to recall for you the fact that our celebration has deep roots and a history which binds us together as a family of faith. I remember reading the words of St. John Chrysostom, a great preacher and teacher of the faith who lived in the fourth century and died in the year 407. He described the Easter celebration in this way: “Let all the pious and all the lovers of God rejoice in the splendour of this feast. Let the wise servants enter into the joy of their Lord; let those who have borne the burden of Lent, now receive their reward; let any who came late, not be afraid, for the Lord is gracious and he receives the last, even as the first - come you all: enter into the joy of your Lord. Christ is risen, and death is abolished, Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice, Christ is risen and life is freed, Christ is risen, and the tomb is emptied, for Christ being risen from the dead, has become the Leader and Reviver of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be glory and power forever.”

The words of this great bishop and teacher are just as true for us today as they were for his parishioners over 1500 years ago. The Lord Jesus is risen and has set us free, free from sin and eternal death. The Lord has prepared a place for us in His kingdom and we follow Him with grace and with joy.

We pray this Easter that there will be peace in our world and that world leaders will work for peace, justice and fairness for all peoples in their lands. The conflicts that continually darken our news broadcasts and the violence and injustices that mark so many areas of conflict in the world today, urge us to pray for peace during the Easter season. We especially pray for peace in Ukraine and in the Holy Land. We also pray for those who are struggling with burdens of unemployment, family conflict, estrangement, poverty and loneliness. As a people of hope who rejoice in the new life Christ has won for us, we are obligated to reach out to others with the compassion of Jesus the Risen Lord, and to carry on His work of redemption through our generosity and care.

Easter is more than lilies, chocolate bunnies and family meals, it is a challenge for each of us to strengthen our relationship with God through our prayer, it is a challenge for us to deepen our family love and concern through reconciliation, it is a challenge for us to recognize that we are linked through Christ to others in our world. May the joy of this season and the grace of God help us to respond to our Easter challenge! Christ is risen! Alleluia!

Most Rev. Fred J. Colli  
Bishop of Thunder Bay  
25th Anniversary Year