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***Be not afraid.  
He is Risen! Alleluia!***



Faith • Hope • Love. Those three powerful words, the three theological virtues, stand out for us on this Easter Day. The world we knew at the beginning of Lent is not the world we witness to at the beginning of Eastertide. The call to repentance is now coupled with the call to faith – faith in the One who is the Conqueror of death and Giver of life.

Distraught, afraid, anxious, bewildered, the women who went to the Tomb early on the morning of the first day faced a different world, a different life than the one which they had celebrated only a week before with the triumphal entry of their Lord into the holy City. Now He lay in a borrowed grave; His crucified body hastily prepared for burial before the Sabbath. What would tomorrow bring? What would become of their lives?

*And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away; for it was very great. And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were afraid. And he saith unto them, Be not afraid. Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here.* St. Mark 16:4-6.

Into a turbulent, troubled world Jesus had come with a message of faith, hope and love. Over and over again, He comforted those who came to Him with the simple words, “Be not afraid.” Into our own turbulent, troubled world today, facing pandemic, sickness and death, Jesus continues to comfort and console with the words, “Be not afraid.” And we in turn, continue to offer the Gospel message of faith, hope and love.

Though unable to gather together in our churches on Easter Day, we are still able to witness to our Easter faith. By way of modern technology, we celebrate the joy of the Resurrection through virtual Services. By way of modern communication, we reach out to those who are afraid, to those who are isolated, to those who are sick, with the message of Christ’s healing power and loving presence. And for those who have lost loved ones we offer our prayers and condolences.

Jesus’ words to His disciples, as He turned toward Jerusalem to face His Passion, stand out to us on this Easter Day: “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Ours is an Easter Faith; we are an Easter people. We profess our faith in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. As we take our part in the care of others and in the well-being of our communities, we do so with faith, hope and love.

In the midst of the current global pandemic, I send you my prayers for a joyous, hope-filled Easter. As a people of faith, I would remind us all of our Lord’s promise to His Apostles that His Church would endure and “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”. We will overcome this pandemic. We will remain strong in faith; giving thanks to God for His “inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.”

A blessed Eastertide to you all.

*+Shane*