



Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

April 4th, 2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Grace and peace be yours in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

It only seems like yesterday that we set out together with Jesus on the road to Jerusalem; we had just entered Alert Level 5. Forty days later, we celebrated His entrance into Jerusalem, with church openings and a gradual reprieve on restrictions. It has been a year of ups and downs, of suffering alongside those who have suffered unemployment, isolation, security and a sense of personal safety, and moments of resurrection, new hope and great love.

Holy Week has taken on a new meaning for many of us. If we have not shared in the sufferings of Christ ourselves, we have witnessed His sufferings in the lives of neighbours, friends and family members. Jesus chose to stand with the marginalized, the ostracized and the downtrodden. His own sufferings are not so much to be pitied as they are to be instructive, pointing us to the wounds of those who suffer unnecessarily, in our communities and in our world.

Through it all, the cross is not the final word. It pales in the light of Christ's victory over sin and death. Though afflicted for a time and for a season, our hope grows stronger -- not in that which will eventually fade, but in the life Christ has won for us. It is a life that begins in the here and now, resplendent in the light of his mercy and love, and culminates in the hereafter with songs of praise and thanksgiving. "Christ is risen! He is truly risen!" "Let us rejoice and be glad".

As we have walked the road together with Christ, so may our sufferings, and the sufferings of the world, be turned into joy. As we have been called to die to self and walk in solidarity with one another, may we draw on His gift of new birth. May the risen Lord, in all His mercy, bless your family and loved ones, and may you rejoice anew in the Mystery of Salvation. Happy Easter!

Fraternally in Christ,

Bishop Bart van Roijen

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