



The Episcopal Diocese of Long Island

BROOKLYN • QUEENS • NASSAU • SUFFOLK

Easter Message 2022

The Right Reverend Lawrence C. Provenzano
Bishop of Long Island

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! The Lord is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

As we enter the Easter Season, sisters and brothers, you'll recall that there are several post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. Of course, there is the story of the stone being rolled away, of Mary Magdalene and the other women coming to the tomb on Easter morning, finding the stone rolled away and Jesus not there. There's the story of Jesus encountering the disciples who are fishing and eventually winds up in the story of Peter and Jesus standing on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius in which Jesus asks over and over again, "Peter, do you love me?" There's story of the doubting Thomas, the disciples all gathered in the upper room for fear of the world around them. And Jesus comes and stands in the midst of them and says, "Peace be with you."

But for this Easter, as we move through what we hope is the end of a pandemic, as we begin to understand how life has changed and how we're going to move our way forward as a people: the post-resurrection story that is stuck in my heart and mind is Jesus appearing to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. As he walks along with them in their despondency, in their anger, their fear, their frustration, talking with one another, and Jesus comes and walks along with them. And they say to him, "Are you the only person who doesn't know what happened?" And they begin to tell the story of the betrayal and the crucifixion: "And now on this third day, some women in our company say that they went to the tomb and they found His body was missing."

In this Eastertide, as we begin these next 50 days, I believe it's important for all of us in our Christian journey to imagine Jesus, us walking along with us, the resurrected Jesus, bringing new life. That we get to understand and know in both the breaking open of God's word and the breaking of the bread. In our times of gathering together, as we begin more and more in this Easter season to gather together--which has not been the case for at least two years--Jesus is there with us walking along. The resurrected Jesus giving us new hope and new confidence as a way of moving forward in our lives.

You see the Resurrection can be either historic fact that we celebrate on Easter Day and then kind of put aside that we've gotten past Lent. We've gone through Holy Week, celebrated Easter, and now it's over.

Or we can imagine as the calendar of the church, as the liturgy of the church have provided for us, that there is a 50-day journey, a walking period in which Jesus walks along with us. And we hear the stories over and over again. And we encourage each other, as the disciples in that story of the road to Emmaus say to one another, "Weren't our hearts burning as he was explaining the scriptures to us? And as we got to know him in the breaking of the bread?"

The Right Reverend Lawrence C. Provenzano, Bishop

36 Cathedral Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530 • 516-248-4800 • Fax 516-877-1349 • www.dioceselongisland.org

Sisters and brothers, as we begin this Easter Season, I encourage you to see Jesus walking along with you. Spend more time, not less time with one another reading scripture, praying together, engaging in the liturgies of the Church. And then from that prayer and from those liturgies reaching out to the wider community around us. That the idea, the reality of the resurrected Christ may infect our very being and the way we are in the world for God's people. That in fact, the proclamation of "Hallelujah, Christ is Risen!" will not just be a phrase we use in our ecclesial settings but a reality in the lived experience of the people with whom we move and have our being.

There used to be an old-fashioned term encouraging people to be an "Easter people". I'd like to reinsert that in our thinking this Easter season: to be Easter people, to be people of real joy and excitement, understanding Jesus, the resurrected Jesus walking along with us, encouraging us, motivating us, inspiring us in new life. God knows the world around us needs new life. As we emerge from this pandemic, as we continually face the ravages of war in Ukraine, the brokenness of people here in our own country, as they deal with the uncertainties of the economy and job loss.

And all of the places in which we find ourselves, we need to be Easter people. Jesus is walking along with us. We walk along with each other and encourage each other and allow our hearts to burn. As we know Jesus and the breaking of the bread and His presence with each of us.

Have a blessed and holy Easter Season. Alleluia, Christ is risen! The Lord is risen, indeed! Alleluia!