

Pastoral Prayer
Easter 2020
Celebrating Easter in the Midst of a Pandemic

So, here we are, God. In the midst of a global pandemic, we arrive at Easter morning—a day when the calendar proclaims victory, but the world is countering with illness and death.

In truth, seldom in our lives have we needed Easter as much as we need it today. We need the promise of new beginnings, of life on the other side of calamity. We need the affirmation of your creatively transforming activity in the world. We need the message embedded in the Easter story that declares—in all times and places, no matter how dire—that death is not the end.

We may have feared our “Hallelujahs” would be tone deaf to the suffering around us, but no, our Hallelujah’s resound with the truth symbolized in this amazing story: that your love is stronger than hopelessness, stronger than death, brimming with surprise, alive with possibilities, calling us forward with renewed determination to put our best selves into the work of building a just and compassionate world.

In this time of social distancing, we have learned all over again the power of community and of relationship, so we give you thanks for all those who have brought friendship, love, and laughter into our lives.

We thank you for those who have listened to our fears, encouraged our faith, held out to us the promise of hope and stood by us in our trials.

We thank you for all those we love who have departed to your eternal care.

May this be a day of resurrection for us, too.

Raise us up from hopeless dismay at violence, illness, and death, selfishness and greed, fear and indifference.

Renew our conviction that there is always something we can do, always something we can contribute to the well-being of creation.

Lift us up to newness of life, to fresh insights, to undiscovered possibilities,

Lead us in paths of peace and justice, reconciliation, and compassion.

Help us to be your encouraging voice, your enfolding arms, your listening ear, to those who are discouraged, dissatisfied, or disheartened.

Empower us to be restorers of the Earth, friend to trees and animals;

Encourage us to put our trust in you and your unfailing presence.

May we learn by heart the Easter message

that you are always already at work within the world and within us,

that even in the bleakest times you are quietly transforming us

that you will ever lead us to new possibilities, new opportunities, new life.

We pray with wonder and gratitude, in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray saying . . .

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