



## Easter Message 2025

*“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.” (John 20:1)*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Christ is risen! He is truly risen! Alleluia!

This is the radiant proclamation of Easter morning, the triumphant cry that echoes across the centuries, resounding in every Christian heart: Jesus Christ has conquered death, and in him, hope is born anew. As Pope Francis reminds us, “It is the Lord, the God of the impossible, who rolled away the stone forever. Even now, he opens our hearts, so that hope may be born ever anew. We too, then, should ‘look up’ to him.” (Homily, Easter Vigil 2024)

What a beautiful and necessary exhortation —look up! In a world burdened by sorrow, division, and the weight of human frailty, we are not alone. Jesus walks with us. His resurrection is not distant or abstract. It is a present reality for us, in every circumstance of our lives. It is the very source of our hope - the hope the world so desperately needs in this Jubilee year. “He is the One who brings us from darkness into light, who is bound to us forever, who rescues us from the abyss of sin and death and draws us into the radiant realm of forgiveness and eternal life.” (Pope Francis, Homily, Easter Vigil, 2024)

We know the reality of sin and darkness. We experience suffering in our lives, in our families, in the Church and in the world. We are not immune to the pain of dashed hopes, the weariness of carrying burdens, the sting of rejection, and the ache of things left unresolved. Like the apostles in the garden of Gethsemane, we are tempted to fall asleep, to let sorrow numb our hearts.

But what makes today different? We know the rest of the story. We know that the stone has been rolled away. The tomb is empty. And that changes everything. The power of the resurrection breaks into the darkest places of our lives, again and again, offering a hope that “does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:5) How can we despair, when Jesus has already conquered? His victory is ours,

and he invites us to claim it—to trust him, and to live in the promise that he is “making all things new.” (Revelation 21:5)

Take a step towards Jesus your redeemer and accept his offer of new life. Renewed in his promise let us go forth as an Easter people—firm in faith, anchored in hope, unwavering in love, and fearless in the joy of the resurrection.

Christ is truly risen, let us rejoice! Alleluia! Alleluia!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian Riesbeck".

✠ Christian Riesbeck, CC  
Bishop of Saint John

April 15, 2025