



**St. Mary's R. C. Church**

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**[www.stmarysandstpaulsparishhamilton.org](http://www.stmarysandstpaulsparishhamilton.org)**

**Newsletter**

**Easter Sunday**

**April 12<sup>th</sup> 2020**

***My dear parishioners at St. Mary's and St. Paul's,***

***The Lord is Risen, Alleluia! Alleluia!*** Easter joy, peace and hope to you and all dear to you! Even if this Easter Day is like no other in living memory due to the constraints placed on us by the Coronavirus, let us still offer heartfelt thanks for the many graces given to us as the parish community of St. Mary's and St. Paul's and pray that we might continue to live the joy of the gospel here in Hamilton together with our Christian friends from the neighbouring churches. Easter glory is our shared heritage.

***The church is an Easter people!*** The eternal Son of God who became flesh for us through the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the humble Virgin Mary, and who suffered and died for us, has risen from the dead. This is the faith of the church handed on through the centuries, especially in our experience of the communion of saints; this is the day the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad! In the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, light has triumphed over the reign of darkness, goodness has triumphed over evil, compassion has triumphed over cruelty and life has triumphed over death. We are created to walk always in the light of Christ!

***Easter is humanity's feast;*** like the great biblical figure of Moses, we too can look forward to the Promised Land, to peace where there is warfare, to reconciliation where there is hatred, to justice and mercy for the refugee and the migrant, to a new dignity of life for those struggling daily in abject poverty; and yes, we have every reason to look forward to a life beyond the Coronavirus, to a life restored.

***In the triumph of the Risen Lord, hope becomes the heartbeat of the Lord's disciples*** and we are among his disciples of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today, on Easter Day 2020, in circumstances that we would never choose, let us find a personal moment and a moment also with family members to celebrate and receive the Risen Lord's invitation to life; the Risen Jesus invites his disciples to be on his side, to really embrace the triumph of light, goodness, compassion and life. May the truthfulness of this feast sustain us in these difficult and challenging days and may it help each one of us become more deeply a son or daughter of the Resurrection.

***Let me say how much I miss your good presence at Mass,*** in the weekday and of course on a Sunday. When I raise the sacred host and precious blood of Jesus at the consecration I ask the Risen Lord to bless you and to keep you safe; Easter blessings on you and on all who are dear to you and especially upon those families who have suffered bereavement since last Easter; may this feast be our deepest comfort. May the Risen Lord give St. Mary's and St. Paul's the grace to be a parish community of hope and life and may our churches be place where all feel welcome. I look forward very much to welcoming you back. Finally, let me take this opportunity to offer my heartfelt thanks for your many kindnesses to the church and to me.

You are in my thoughts and prayers each day,

*Father O'Brien*

## **Bishop Toal's Easter Message 2020**

As Christians celebrate Easter this year we are thinking of the suffering inflicted upon us by the Covid-19 Virus. It is a dreadful time for the whole world and our thoughts are with those who have caught the virus and their loved ones. We are grateful for the dedication and courage of those caring for the sick and vulnerable, and all who are providing the essential services we all rely on.

It is hard to find hope, but our celebration of Easter encourages us to have such a hope – a hope that we will recover and that life will be better again. For Christians we find our hope in Jesus Christ, who having suffered a terrible death on the cross rose again to new life and promised us a share in eternal life. In such a time of crisis we cling on to this faith and reach out to Our Lord in our need.

Although we have not been able this year to celebrate these precious days for our faith in our churches, we have sought the Lord and felt his presence strongly within and among us. In the Church's faith in Jesus, risen from the dead, I wish everyone a Happy Easter as we seek God's blessing on us all and on our world in our present need.

+Joseph Toal

Bishop of Motherwell