

Christ is Risen. Risen, Indeed!

This triumphant faith filled acclamation is an Easter greeting used in many parts of the world, particularly in Eastern Europe. It clearly affirms what is celebrated and remembered at Easter. That the Lord Jesus who was crucified and died on Calvary LIVES. That the Incarnate God who died and was buried LIVES. He Lives. He Is Risen. This is the foundational confession of our Christian faith.

We spend six weeks of Lent getting ready for Easter and then seven weeks of the Easter Season celebrating the mystery of the Risen Christ. It is a joyous celebration. Easter Joy. It is a hope-filled celebration. Easter Hope. It is a life-giving celebration. Easter Life. It begins on Easter Sunday and continues for 50 days as if it is one Sunday. This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice in it. May you experience in your life the JOY of Easter. Enough of sadness. Enough of troubles. Enough of illness. Enough of stress. Enough of worries. Let the JOY of the Resurrection mingle with your tears, your concerns, your pain so that in your life you may know Easter JOY.

May you experience in your life the HOPE of Easter. Enough of despair. Enough of discouragement. Enough of emptiness. Let the HOPE of the Resurrection mingle with your despair, your doubts, your questions so that in your life you may know Easter Hope. The same power that resurrected Jesus from the dead can happen to you and touch your life with Easter Hope and Easter Joy. And, not just at Easter. God is risen every day of the year, not just one day. Every day you can experience Easter Hope and Easter Joy.

The colorful flowers of Easter announce that the earth is awakening from its winter sleep as Christ in the tomb awakened from death to life. Easter eggs remind us that Jesus broke out of the grave with full life as a chick hatches out of the confines of its shell. Easter bunnies remind us of the Easter message of New Life. Rabbits are prolific animals. Christ was given an abundance of new life, both human and divine, at His Resurrection. These popular symbols, eggs, bunnies, flowers point to the new life we share with Christ as a result of Baptism. The new life He was given at His Resurrection from the dead is poured into us in the waters of Baptism. *It is ours for the taking. And, take it we will!* We will walk in a "newness of life" as the Church reminds us at the Renewal of our Baptism promises at Easter. We will have hope and joy.

Our faith in the Risen Lord can hold in check the many fears, anxieties, troubles and concerns that we deal with. He has defeated sin and death. The tomb could not hold Him down. The stone was rolled away. Their manifestations in our lives do not have to hold us down. Faith can help to roll them away. Easter is a new beginning for Christ and for us Christians. I pray that its power touches you every day. May you have a Blessed Easter Sunday and a Joy-filled and Hopeful Easter Season.

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-2019 Easter Message, Most Rev. Dennis J. Sullivan, Bishop of Camden

Blessed Easter Season to ALL our parishioners, families & friends here at St. Frances Cabrini Church! The message of Easter is ALWAYS the message of hope. A hope that lies not in some distant future but right in the here & now of your life. That hope is Jesus Christ who conquers death not only to save us but to assure us of His presence in all of life, in all we fear, in all we face. Never, never forget how much He loves you & how valuable you are to Him. Easter proves it!

With love in the Risen Jesus, Fr. Jim, Pastor

— Fr. Jim!