



BISHOP OF HAMILTON

2015 Easter Message

Dear friends in Christ:

At the beginning of our 40 day Lenten journey, we were marked with ashes in the Sign of the Cross – a stark reminder that we are going to die, all of us, sooner or later. Now, at the Easter celebrations, those ashes are washed away when we are “soaked” with the same Easter water with which The Elect are baptized! Death no longer has a claim on us. We know that God has the last word – and God’s word for us is the same as His word for Jesus, who was crucified, died and laid in the tomb. **LIVE!** And so we do; **WE LIVE – IN HIM!**

WE LIVE! WE LIVE IN HIM! And that is what we celebrate this Easter and every Easter! It is why we “pull out all the stops” – the Easter fire, the huge Easter candle (Christ our light!), the many Scripture readings that point us to LIFE, the Easter water (Baptism – new life), the incense, the bells, the flowers – all of our senses are inundated because this message is so very important! **BECAUSE HE LIVES – WE LIVE! WE LIVE FULLY NOW**, and we enjoy the blessed promise that **WE WILL LIVE ETERNALLY WITH HIM THEN!** This is the hope that keeps us focused every day.

So, how do we choose to live? Like Him, we choose to live *for others*; that is the ideal toward which we strive each day, every day, one day at a time! It is what our Lenten discipline has helped us practice. It is expressed in the many small sacrifices we accepted, culminating, perhaps, in our Share Lent offering which supports the unknown poor in faraway places, waiting, longing for, our solidarity and support!

Together now, united in Him, we set out on 50 days of joyous Easter celebration – celebrating LIFE and self-giving LOVE. During these days, our FAITH in Jesus Christ can deepen, our HOPE in the fullness of life with Him can become ever more convinced, and our LOVE for one another, especially those in particular need, can increase!

HAPPY EASTER!