

*"Unbind him [her] and set him [her] free" (John; 11:44)*



Easter is a time of faith, love, joy and hope. As we celebrate this great mystery, Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo's deep reflection on this great feast, reminds us that, "God's love is the greatest love of all. It is a love stronger than our failures, deeper than our wounds, and greater than our sins." Indeed, celebrating the Risen Lord is a special moment for all of us, members, as well as friends of Pax Christi International. It is a time to look back and thank God for journeying closely with us, our families, friends, communities and our global world. It is a time for soul searching and deep reflections on our call to be our sister and brother's keeper. It is a time to call each other to accountability and stewardship of the environment that cries in silence from the burden of wars that seem to have no end. It is a time to ask hard questions of our leaders both locally and globally, challenging them on their commitment to the call to servant leadership (Luke;22:27); a life of service to their citizens and those they are invited to embrace especially the poor, those in forced migration and those disposed of their land; a life of humility and not oppression and pride. It is a time to heed to the cry of the poor and cry of the earth, that they too may experience the joy and hope of the Risen Lord.

Let us begin this new journey with the Risen Lord by responding in prayer and action to the following reflective question:

*What does it mean to 'rejoice' and 'hope' in the Risen Lord in our times today where ...*

*Darkness seem brighter than light*

*Violence attracts and prevails more than peace*

*Lies overshadows the truth*

*Indifference and exclusion normalised more than mercy and compassion*

*Hate more embraced than love*

*Greed easily accepted as a norm and sharing as something to be scorned upon*

May the fruit of this reflection ignite us to concretely journey with the Risen Lord, by living out the gospel of nonviolence that is exemplified in His pascal mystery. Indeed let us go and announce the good news to the poor and advocate for and with them, proclaim release to captives, challenge those that are blind to the suffering of others, free the downtrodden in our society, and proclaim God's year of jubilee (Luke;4:18-19), that our Lord is truly risen and will be with us to the end of time (Matthew; 28:20). May we not only sing 'Alleluia!Alleluia! Alleluia! but let this be exemplified in our lives each day.

For all those in our world today that have lost loved ones, suffer injustice and different forms of violence, discrimination, forced migration, coerced to fight endless wars that have led to so much loss of human and other lives, destruction of the environment and infrastructure, destroys today and future generations; our God has not forgotten but encircles you with unconditional love and comforts you with these words of hope:

*I will wipe all tears from your eyes;*

*There will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness.*

*This world will come to pass...*

*Behold, I make all things new (Revelation; 21:4,5)*

May the Peace of the Risen Lord be with you all, your families, friends, communities and to all God's creation.