

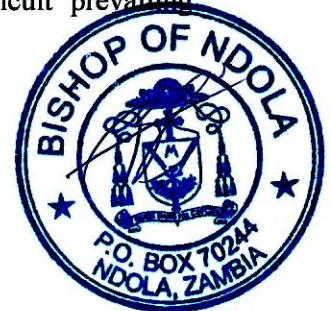


EASTER MESSAGE 2022

In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” -1 Peter 1:3

The Grace and Peace of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you!

1. My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, The message of Easter – the Resurrection of Jesus – takes us beyond the Cross to the joy and hope that comes from seeing the Risen Lord. In this year's celebration of Easter as we slowly come out of the pandemic of Covid -19 and its devastating impact upon our world and our very lives, we hope to look for a consoling celebration in which a new life will be given to us. *“In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” – 1 Peter 1:3 NIV.*
2. Once again, we have the opportunity to celebrate the new lease of life that God has given us in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This Good News of Easter is constant and unchanged no matter the conditions and situations we face. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who took up his cross and died for us, is our salvation. He is risen from the dead. He was not defeated but proved victorious: turning darkness to light; suffering to glory and even death to life. This is indeed the great mercy of God. The Easter story surely solidifies the triumph of light over darkness, the victory of life over death, and the culmination of God's breaking into history to bring each of us to himself/herself. We know that the suffering of this present moment cannot separate us from God's love. *“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” - Romans 8: 38-39.*
3. In this past year with the ongoing restrictions of the pandemic we had been intensely united with Jesus, in His passion, the carrying of the Cross, and the obedient acceptance of the Father's will in sacrificial love for others. It was not easy for us to carry on with our normal routines of daily life but God in his mercy has given us a glimmer of hope that life can be better as we continue to experience the decrease in the number of new infections of the pandemic. God has truly inspired many of us in faith to act with this same love, patient suffering, endurance and courage in the face of despair and in offering a hope which has been inspired by the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. *“In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” – 1 Peter 1:3*
4. God raised Jesus from the dead for our sake so that we may have life and hope. Indeed God showed us an **act of love** to learn from. Easter comes as such an act of love that restores human dignity for those who have been burdened by the worries of this world: the death of loved ones, the loss of employment and many other economical challenges brought about by the unstable world economy. Despite the difficult prevailing



circumstances, we remain hopeful that the power of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ will bring consolation to us in this moment.

5. Furthermore, God in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ has indeed shown us His great mercy by restoring life in Christ Jesus. In the same manner, all Christians and indeed all the people in the world have been called to respond with compassion, solidarity and in caring for those who are suffering and the most vulnerable; in particular to all places where there is lack of peace and hope due to war and other armed conflicts leading to humanitarian disasters and an influx of refugees. The resurrection is a true sign of hope and faith which caused the disciples not to proclaim the tragedy of Jesus' death but rather His resurrection as **the promise of eternal life, of joy and confidence** in the Holy Spirit. Easter makes us bearers of good tidings which bring hope and consolation to all!
6. Easter also reminds us of being people of prayer for the spiritual welfare of our souls. Let us remember to continue praying for our families, for our communities, for our Diocese, for our political leaders, for those who are sick, and for those who are dying. We must not only remember to focus on our trials, but to be thankful for the blessings we receive from the risen Lord. We are the Easter people. *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* - 1 Thess. 5: 16-18.
7. Jesus revealed himself to the disciples in tangible ways especially in the anticipation of His suffering and death. In the enduring gift of His Presence "in the breaking of the bread" – the Eucharist, we come to know in faith that our suffering and death can be united with Christ and have deeper meaning when offered to God. Dear people of God: At this difficult economical time in the world, how blessed we are to be united in faith and hope. I pray that Our Lord Jesus will bless you and your families with his peace this Easter and always as together, we proclaim ***"Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead and is alive and with us. Alleluia. Alleluia!"***
8. Finally, brothers and sisters let the celebration of Easter overcome our anxieties in that precise moment of uncertainty of what is to come. The risen Lord assures us of the future to come when he speaks to the disciples - *"Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."* Mat 28:10. The risen Lord is with us.
May Mary, our mother, lead us to Christ, who has defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation!

Given at Ndola, Cathedral of Christ the King, this **17th day of April**, on the **Solemnity of the Resurrection of Christ the King** in the Year of our Lord 2022.



Rt. Rev. Dr. Benjamin Phiri, JCD
Bishop of Ndola

