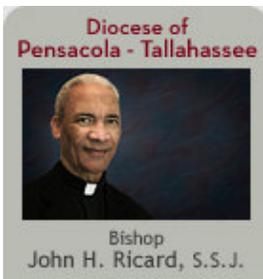


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## ‘The resurrection of Christ is the sure and certain hope that we seek’

An Easter message from the office of the bishop

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Christ left us an example which we must follow, and if we follow him faithfully, we can face life with its inevitable moments of brutality and cruelty.”

We approach the Easter season early this year, the earliest possible date it can be celebrated. It occurs just a few days after the first day of spring, as nature struggles to shed the last remains of winter and welcomes the sunny days of birds, bugs and flowers.

Within this natural environment, we also reflect on the greater drama that is unfolding in the liturgy in our parishes: the celebration of the Lord’s Passover from death to life. We also note that this Easter is celebrated at a time when many

individuals and families in our nation struggle with unprecedented economic hardships and difficulty. The news is dominated by global violence, conflict and the gross violations of human life, human dignity and human rights.

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If we are longing for some sign of hope and way out of this, we could not find a better source than the Easter story. The resurrection of Christ is the sure and certain hope that we seek. It is the hope that is to be found in that place of quiet contemplation at the foot of the cross, which in turn inexorably draws us to the silence of the empty tomb.

At the time of his passion, Christ faced the cross squarely and unflinchingly without any attempt to diminish its brutality and cruelty. He could have asked his Father to send 12 legions of angels to stop those who had come to arrest him; but he did not (cf. Mt 26:53).

Christ left us an example which we must follow, and if we follow him faithfully, we can face life with its inevitable moments of brutality and cruelty. Christ will lead us to the cross which, if we will but embrace it as our supporting staff, greatly lightens the load. The load is made lighter because the cross leads, as it did with Christ, to the glory of Easter.

I pray that all may come to a deeper appreciation of the great comfort we will find in the cross, if we have the courage to seek it. May you and your families enjoy all the blessings won for us by Christ and may you have a very happy and glorious celebration of Easter.

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