



DIOCESE OF JEFFERSON CITY

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Easter 2020

He is risen, Alleluia! Just as he said, Alleluia!

As we begin this new season of Easter, our spirits are lifted and renewed with Jesus' promise to bring us back together again. His death and resurrection changed the world forever, making all things new.

During the passion of Jesus, his band of disciples were scandalized by his suffering. They were afraid and they scattered.

Therefore, when Jesus rose from the dead, his first concern was to gather his disciples together once again in Galilee. That is what is so significant in the message he had Mary Magdalen and the other Mary relay to the other disciples: "Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." The presence of the risen Jesus brought the band of disciples back together again.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to become more isolated from one another:

Some of us are grieving the death of loved ones without the full benefit of our funeral rites and without the consolation that comes from the presence of our dear family and friends in our time of mourning.

Others are struggling to regain their health in hospitals and nursing homes, and again, are without the presence of family and friends to comfort them.

And we all suffer from the social distancing and isolation that come with the "shelter in place" order as our new normal. It is as though we have been scattered from one another. And yet, the suffering and sacrifices of so many people during this pandemic is not in vain.

The women and men in today's Gospel have an urgency - they are running to find the Lord. We, too, must have a sense of urgency in finding God's salvation by how we respond to the pandemic.

I am inspired by the acts of charity and mercy of so many people: the farmers, grocery store workers and restaurant personnel; truck drivers and delivery people; teachers; health care professionals; public officials; volunteers who are young and old—the list goes on and on.

Together, each of us has an important role to play to stop the spread of the coronavirus and to encourage the spread of God's mercy. And with our tenacious Easter faith, we look forward to the day when we can all go to Church together again. What a great day that will be!

We need everyone to participate in a renewal of faith as we come out on the other side of this crisis. I pray we can discern together, from our response to the pandemic, on how we can be stewards of God's generosity, make our homes even more holy, and make our parishes truly centers of charity and mercy.

We are witnesses of all God has done, and we must proclaim, in our words and in our deeds, that he has made all things new again! I wish you and your families a happy Easter Season, a season of life and love, a season of the Holy Spirit.

Most Rev. W. Shawn McKnight, S.T.D.
Bishop of Jefferson City