

Easter 2021

*“Brothers and sisters:
If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above,
where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.
Think of what is above, not of what is on earth.” (Col 3:1)*

Dear Friends,

As Co-Chairs and Co-Secretaries of the International Commission for Dialogue between the Disciples of Christ and the Catholic Church, we wish to share a message of hope and blessing on this coming Easter Sunday. Our ecumenical relationship is based on our common faith and hope in the salvation given us in Jesus’ death and resurrection. Last year, Pope Francis conveyed an Easter message common to all of us and to all Christians: “Jesus Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!”

In a world facing epochal challenges and oppressed by a pandemic severely testing our whole humanity, the Church’s voice rings out: ‘Christ, our hope, is risen!’ This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not ‘bypass’ suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God.

In these past weeks, the lives of millions of people have suddenly changed. For many, this is also a time of worry about an uncertain future.

- *This is not a time for indifference, because the whole world is suffering and needs to be united in facing the pandemic.*
- *This is not a time for self-centeredness, because the challenges we are facing is shared by all, without distinction between peoples.*
- *This is not a time for division within our nations, our world, or in our churches.*
- *This is not a time for forgetfulness. The crisis we are facing should not make us forget the many other crises that bring suffering to so many people.*

Indifference, self-centeredness, division and forgetfulness are not an appropriate response of faith in these times. They seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives. May Christ, who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of his glory day, a day that knows no end.

– Pope Francis, Message Urbi et Orbi, 2020

With these words of hope and God’s abiding promise of new life, we wish each of you a happy Easter. We look forward to the day when we will be able to meet in-person to begin the new phase of our dialogue in confidence that “Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!”

Bishop David Ricken
Msgr. Juan Usma Gomez

Rev. Dr. Robert Welsh
Rev. Paul Tche