



RC DIOCESE OF EAST ANGLIA

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Easter day is the key to understanding life and death

The resurrection of Jesus Christ connects us to the beginning of everything and with the end of everything, says Bishop Peter Collins, in his Easter message.

The first reading from the sacred Scriptures at the Easter vigil takes us back to the dawn of time: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." We are enlightened regarding the origin of life in God. This begins our great reflection on the journey we take toward eternal life.

Our experience of Easter day, our passage through the entirety of the Easter season, needs to be an engagement with the revelation that the resurrection of Jesus Christ connects us to the beginning of everything and with the end of everything. The life and death of each and every one of us can only be fully understood by reference to Easter day, by reference to the risen Lord, for he is the alpha and the omega.

As the Easter sequence proclaims, "death with life contended: combat strangely ended! Life's own champion, slain, yet lives to reign... that Christ is truly risen from the dead we know. Victorious king, thy mercy show."

As we contend with the sorrows and joys of life, we experience the full range of human complexities. What our Catholic faith proclaims with full vigour on Easter day is that Christ embraces each and every one of us when he embraced the cross of sacrifice and he embraces each and every one of us when he rose from the dead and escaped the confinement of the tomb.

In the full communion of our faith we rejoice in our proclamation to the world that the risen Lord is the life, the light, the hope of the world.

As we bathe in the light and joy of Easter, let us reflect well upon the journey we have taken thus far and resolve to stand always in the company of the risen Lord.

With faith, hope and love we pray that our eyes will eagerly behold the risen Lord each day, that our ears will attentively listen to the risen Lord each day, that our hearts will generously respond to the risen Lord each day.

We stand not alone in the midst of the world, for we share our habitat with the entire human family. On Easter day we proclaim our solidarity with all who are suffering, near and far. We acknowledge that many of our brothers and sisters are afflicted by violence in all its forms.

There is growing anxiety regarding the inherent inequalities and uncertainties across the global social and economic order. The stability of our environment and climate is suffering degradation. The integrity of our moral identity and sense of responsibility is threatened by deepening fractures.

On this Easter day we proclaim that answers are available for the complex questions that face humanity. However, these answers will never be simplistic nor will they emerge from merely materialistic sources.

We will need to apply our scientific knowledge to the full, but yet more is needed. It will be our spiritual understanding that will enable us to truly grasp the beginning and end of everything, to grasp the true significance of what it is to be a human being.

As we celebrate Easter day and the Easter season we proclaim boldly that it is the risen Lord, and he alone, who can fashion and sustain our focus on all that is true, all that is good, all that is right and just.

As I rejoice in offering you my Easter greetings, I further rejoice in thanking you for your faithful allegiance to the risen Lord, for your generosity in proclaiming the Gospel through the witness of your words and through the service of your actions. It is the risen Lord himself, and he alone, who enables us to sustain our communion of hope-filled solidarity.

Let us rejoice to say together: the Lord is risen, alleluia, alleluia.

Pictured is Bishop Peter Collins. Picture by Bill Smith