

## 2020 Easter Message - Bishop Thomas Zinkula

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This Easter Sunday many of you, perhaps for the first time, will experience Easter Mass in your home through television or livestreaming on social media. Likewise, this no doubt will be the first time our priests celebrate the Triduum in an empty church.

In some way, all of us have been sharing in the difficult cross of not being able to gather for Mass and the other sacraments. Some are bearing the heartbreaking cross of not being able to be with a loved one or a parishioner who is dying of COVID-19. And they themselves are bearing the terrible cross of dying alone.

How do we get from the cross to the resurrection? According to the Catholic Committee of Appalachia, "If we are people of resurrection, we need to be in places of crucifixion."

The cross of the coronavirus pandemic will still be with us on Easter Sunday. In our fear and anguish, we might question God: "Where are you in this? Where is the new life, the resurrected life of Easter?"

God, in turn, might question us: "Where are you in this? Are those of you who are healthy caring for the sick? Are family members loving one another? Are those who are privileged and entitled praying for and reaching out to those who are hurting and suffering on the peripheries?"

As Jesus bore his cross for others, for us, we do the same. That is how we get from the cross to the resurrection, by being with one another in places of crucifixion.

St. John Paul II once said:

*There is no evil to be faced that Christ does not face with us. There is no enemy that Christ has not already conquered. There is no cross to bear that Christ has not already borne for us, and does not now bear with us. And on the far side of every cross, we find the newness of life in the Holy Spirit, that new life which will reach its fulfillment in the resurrection. This is our faith. This is our witness before the world.*

Just like you and your family, our parishes are suffering from this crisis and need our help. I am deeply grateful to those who can continue supporting the Church with financial assistance. Your Sunday gifts are critical for the continued operation of your parish, including outreach to those most in need, at this unprecedented moment in time.

Although we will miss each other on Easter Sunday, we nevertheless will be united in Christ. Let us keep praying for each other. Let us pray for our first responders and health care professionals, our pharmacists and grocery workers, our delivery drivers and postal employees, and other essential personnel who are risking exposure to COVID-19 to serve us during this crisis so we can stay home and stay healthy. And finally, let us pray for those who are suffering the most as a result of this pandemic. Please remember that no matter how confined we seem to be to places of crucifixion, we are a people of resurrection. We are an Easter people.

Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Americas, pray for us.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Most Rev. Thomas R. Zinkula  
Bishop of Davenport