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Office of the Bishop

Bishop's Easter Message 2009

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The Paschal Season reminds us: We have nothing to fear

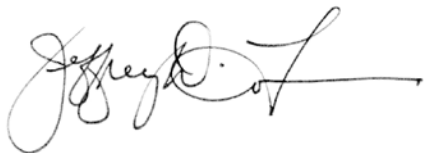
Dear Friends in Christ,

The Paschal Season is much bigger than what we usually mean with the simple word Easter. It is bigger and truer because it includes both sides of the reality we name as the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Paschal Season is a way of naming the heart of the liturgical year that runs from Lent through the Great Three Days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day, and on to the Feast of Pentecost. It refers to the central mystery of the Christian faith –the life, death and resurrection of the Lord, the Passover of Christ from death to that unimaginable new reality we call resurrection.

The Passover of the Lord refers to the death and resurrection of Jesus, but the mighty good news of Easter is that it indicates not just Jesus' passage through the cross, but ours too. We who have been made members of Christ's Body are included in this movement from death to new life. The Paschal Season begins in ashes but it ends with a mighty rush of wind and flame. Throughout the diocese and the church worldwide this Easter new sisters and brothers have passed through the waters of chaos and death and been born again into the image and likeness of Christ. They are living signs to us of the power of God to change lives. They remind us that with Jesus, we are all destined for glory.

I don't think there is any better news than this and we need to proclaim it now more than ever. Much of the apparent security of our world has been called into question by our current economic turmoil. Those who are already on the margins of society suffer disproportionately the effects of it. War, hunger, ethnic conflict, all take a heavier toll on the world than ever. The plagues of violence, racism and inequality continue to keep us from becoming the society we claim to be. Sometimes the bad news seems relentless. But in the face of all of it, now is the time for Christians to proclaim the power of God to bring new life out of anything death has to throw at us. We are not alone. The Holy Spirit is with us as the power to change the world.

I wish you all a holy Paschal Feast. Christ is risen. And we have nothing to fear.



Jeffrey D. Lee
Bishop of Chicago



CELEBRATING
AND SHARING
OUR FAITH