

# Easter Message 2023



Dearly beloved in Christ,

I greet you all in the precious name of our risen Lord Jesus Christ. May the blessings of the risen Lord be with you, in renewing your faith and experiencing the newness of life which Christ assured us in His resurrection.

### **Resurrection: Promise of New Life**

We began this season of Lent meditating and reflecting upon a deciduous tree. During this lenten time, I was lucky to find a tree while visiting a friend's house. This tree is very common in South India and called by the name Moringa which has tremendous health benefits when consumed as food. So, I got cut branches of the tree to plant it in our backyard. I planted it in the backyard hoping for it to grow. It stood just like a stick with no leaves. But after a few days I found mold on top of it. I was a little worried if this branch would survive and become a tree. But after waiting for more than a week, the cut branch finally began to sprout out leaves which gave me hope that this cut branch could grow into a new plant. Easter and resurrection offer us the same meaning in our lives: there is life within and is continuous.

St. Paul in his epistle to Colossians writes, "your life is hidden with Christ in God" (3.3). To me, this verse is a powerful statement: Like the branch I planted, life was hidden in it which began to show off one fine day by sprouting out leaves, our life is inseparable from Christ and God being the source of our life. Again, Paul encourages his readers to find meaning in the following words: "if anyone is in Christ, there is new creation: everything old has passed away" (2 Cor.5.17). The disciples of Christ had left everything and began to follow Jesus because some of them believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and some other believed that he would become the king, and some other believed that he would not face something deadlier like a cross. When Jesus was crucified, they were caught up in fear, and their hope was shattered. The news of Jesus' resurrection gave them hope for a new beginning. Resurrection offers us a promise and hope for new life and a new beginning.

## **Resurrection: Towards An Equal Life for All**

Earlier, you heard from me about the oppression and discrimination faced by Dalits and Tribals in India for more than two millennia. The downtrodden and outcast communities in India believed there is no salvation for them because of their birth as an outcast. They were made to believe that they would accept the karma of life and accept the oppression obediently. Rebirth and the afterlife would not give them liberation from the clutches of oppressive slavery structures.

But when the message of the resurrection of Christ was preached to them, it offered them hope for a new life and liberation from the enslaving social norms. The message of the Cross and Resurrection: that God shows no partiality and anyone who does right is acceptable to him (Acts 10.34,35) is significant in the lives of those who are not treated equally nor with dignity. This is true even today that many among us are looking for a life where they would be accepted, treated with dignity and equally. The message of resurrection signifies the transformation of life as in the words of Paul: the dishonour becomes glorified, and the weak becomes powerful (1 Cor. 15.50). Resurrection assures us of the transformation of our lives, and this transformation leads to equality of life, what I would say is the equal quality of life for all.

## **Resurrection: A Call for the Church to witness the Risen Lord**

The Church is called to be a witnessing community. We renew our baptismal vows on Easter day. Our baptism itself is a witness to the world. It invites us to take this responsibility of the risen Lord to enable the promise of new life to come true and to ensure equality of life for all. The church is called to be the agency of God's Kingdom on the earth to carry out the mission of God. As we look forward to experiencing the new life assured in the resurrection of Christ, may we as a church commit ourselves to realise the promise of new life and equality in the lives of those who search for them.

I wish you all a wonderful Easter Day! God bless you!!

Yours in Christ  
Sam.