



Anglican Network in Canada

Office of the Diocesan Bishop
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My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, fellow partners in the gospel,

I greet you in the name of the Crucified and Risen One, Jesus who conquered death for us. I greet you on behalf of my fellow bishops and their wives: Bishop Trevor and Dede, Bishop Stephen and Nona, Bishop Don and Trudy, Bishop Ron and Jan, Bishop Malcolm and Mary Lou, and my wife Judy and myself.

This week, Holy Week, marks the most momentous event in history – the complete, eternal and comprehensive victory by the hero of our faith, Jesus Christ. The enemy is sin, death and judgement, and Jesus, in one great action, defeated all of these by his death and resurrection.

In this letter I am zeroing in on death. I do so because in our day there is a growing climate and culture where death is portrayed as an ally or even a friend in a growing number of circumstances. Death, if on our own terms, is associated with dignity, and increasingly perceived as a right and an answer to difficult situations.

But make no mistake; God does not consider death to be a friend or as a solution. Death is the enemy; death is the problem; death is to be conquered. Thank God Jesus came, and in dying and rising again, defeated death so that we too might have Life.

Consider these passages:

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John 10:10

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live"

John 11:25

Across the board, from beginning to end, the Bible is clear – God loves Life. And Jesus came to live, die and rise again to make Life – eternal Life, in all its fullness – available to us, to sinful men and women, to all who believe in the One who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Death is the enemy. The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. But Jesus came to bring abundant Life. He *is* Life. He was victorious over death and by his resurrection he has become the first fruits of all them that slept. To put your faith in Him is to assure yourself of Life with Him forever.

My prayer for each of you is that you will know the full power and joy of His resurrection in your life and that every ANiC congregation will experience much joy in worship this Easter.

I am reminded of the final verses of 1 Corinthians 15, that incredible chapter on the resurrection – which incidentally was the passage J I Packer preached on in the final service of our last Synod.

When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:54-57 (ESV)

Because of the resurrection of Jesus, because he has conquered death, the sting of death is gone.

Paul concludes that same chapter:

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (ESV)

So dear brothers and sisters, Rejoice and press on in the risen Lord Jesus!

My dear friends, may you experience Easter joy and Easter blessings today, and throughout the year, as we live in the knowledge that death is defeated and Life, abundant Life, is ours in Jesus!

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a plus sign followed by the name "Chad" in a cursive script.