

Bishop Skirving's Easter 2024 Message Transcript

Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia! Greetings, friends, and happy Easter! The journey through Lent is over for another year. The passage through the days of Holy Week have come to an end, and we now celebrate the great Good News that God raised Jesus from death.

Our Easter celebrations can be an overwhelming experience. So many images, so much stimulation. The glorious music that is offered in so many of our churches. The bright flowers that are gathered which adorn our churches. Families dressed in bright clothing. Hints of chocolate eggs on every side. We can be so busy with the excitement of the celebration of Easter that sometimes I fear we lose track of the message that is at the center.

And so today, I want to share with you as simply as I can that message, as I understand it. At our Easter Sunday celebrations, we read from the Acts of the apostles, and in today's reading, there are three simple words I want to offer: God raised him. God raised him. Or, as we may prefer, God raised Jesus. On this day we celebrate that the darkness, and the evil, and the worldly powers that condemned Jesus to death and killed him on a cross have not triumphed, but that God raised Jesus from death, showing that God's power and God's love was greater than all of the forces and energies of our human life.

God raised Jesus, and so God promises to raise us from darkness to light, from sin and brokenness to wholeness. God offers a new life, which is a restoration to the full image of life for which God created us. Friends, this Easter season, as we continue through these 50 days to celebrate the Good News that God raised Jesus, let our faith proclaim with joy our hope that God's love will continue to show itself in the events of our own world. That God's power will continue to show itself even over the powers which surround us on every side.

Where there is darkness, may there be light. Where there is hatred. May there be reconciliation and peace. Where there is injury, may there be healing. May we be agents of God's love., such that those of this world who live with us will become even more clear day by day that God's love triumphs over all other powers.

In proclaiming that God raised Jesus, we proclaim a great truth for our time, for us and for all people: God loves us. God wants for us something greater than what we can imagine, and God calls us to die to those old things that hold us back and to be born again through baptism into the new life of the resurrection.

Friends, I pray that the Good News of Easter has filled your heart and will continue to fill your heart. May God's love carry us forward. May God's Spirit protect us and guide us on the way. Peace and blessings to you and all whom you love this Easter morning and forever. Amen.