



## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

April 12, 2019

At the beginning of the Easter Vigil, after the blessing of the fire and the lighting of the paschal candle, the ancient proclamation, the *Exsultet*, is chanted. It is the song of our salvation because, in poetic verse, it presents us with the meaning and significance of the Resurrection of Our Lord.

One of the more notable lines in the *Exsultet* is found in the following, "O truly necessary sin of Adam, destroyed completely by the Death of Christ! O happy fault that earned for us so great, so glorious a Redeemer." Here we find reference to Original Sin and to the fact that good can come from something that, by its very nature, is bad. We celebrate in song the reality that God is able to turn evil to good.

In the fifth century, Pope St. Leo the Great wrote, "Through the cross, the faithful receive strength from weakness, glory from dishonour, and life from death" (Sermon 59). This is the essence of the Paschal Mystery. It is only through the suffering and death of Jesus that we can experience life. What seems to be a contradiction is the essence of our salvation. The Resurrection is all about transforming perceived failure into victory.

The Easter message offers great hope in this life as we celebrate the fact that triumph can come from tragedy. When we feel overwhelmed by life, or discouraged by our sin and weakness, we do not give up because all is not lost. If we focus on the Risen Lord, then we will see good come from evil and hope from despair.

Our Blessed Mother Mary is a perfect example of this attitude for she believed that nothing is impossible with God. She journeyed with her Son to Calvary, stood beneath His cross, and was a witness to His Resurrection. She was one of the first to receive His gift of peace. Mary lived the entire Paschal Mystery and will help us to do the same.

"O happy fault that earned for us so great, so glorious a Redeemer." May that great Redeemer, Our Lord Jesus Christ, grant you the gift of peace during this Holy Easter Season.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.  
Bishop of St. Catharines