



# **Rejoice in the Lord**

## **By Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.**

### **Archbishop of Newark**

April 2, 2021 / Vol. 2, No. 14



## **The Paschal Triduum brings us closer to the Lord**

We have now reached the culmination of our Lenten journey, the Paschal Triduum. Each year the Church gives us the opportunity to share in the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ through our celebration of the liturgies for Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter. As Pope Francis reminds us, this is “a time of grace” for us, a time to grow closer to God and to one other by experiencing prayerfully the powerful moments of Christ’s last days on earth.

How can we be indifferent to his suffering and death if we participate in his Last Supper; if we share his agony in the garden; if we see him scourged, mocked and crowned with thorns; if we witness his condemnation by religious and political authority; if we walk with him on the Way of the Cross; if we stand before the Crucified One as he utters his last words; and if we help his mother and a few faithful friends lay him in the tomb? How can we abandon him—as Peter and most of the others did—when we know that he suffered, died and rose again for us?



The Paschal Triduum is meant to be a liturgical experience that runs the gamut from profound sorrow to intense joy. Why do we put ourselves through this every year? Why relive experiences that were excruciatingly painful—and shameful—for all concerned? Why reenact the disciples’ infidelity and their failure to understand that Jesus had to rise from the dead (Jn 20: 1–9)?

Pope Francis says we do these things in order to break through our indifference to our neighbor and to God. We observe the discipline of Lent and we celebrate the great mysteries of the Paschal Triduum in order to “trouble our conscience.” We need this time of interior renewal and reawakening, the Holy Father says, “lest we become indifferent and withdraw into ourselves.”

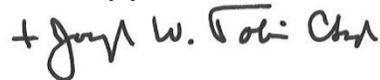
All baptized Christians find ourselves on a journey. We walk together in the footsteps of the risen Christ as we travel toward our heavenly home. This sacred pilgrimage is not meant to be a time of drudgery and sorrow. Although it’s true that we are called to follow Jesus on the Way of the Cross, we should always remember our Lord’s promise to his disciples, “You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy” (Jn 16:20). For 2,000 years, the saints and martyrs have shown us how to live the Gospel—and take up our crosses—with joy. We are all invited, with St. Paul, to rejoice in our sufferings!

“The great danger in today’s world,” Pope Francis writes in *Evangelii Gaudium*, “is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience... That is no way to live a dignified and fulfilled life; it is not God’s will for us, nor is it the life in the Spirit which has its source in the heart of the risen Christ.” We are called to a dignified and fulfilled life, a life of freedom and joy. “No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her,” Pope Francis says, “since no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord.”

As we enter into the Paschal Triduum this year, let’s open our hearts to the presence of God as it manifests itself in many different ways—in the Eucharist, in the veneration of the Holy Cross, and in the singing of the Exultet and the Gloria at the Easter Vigil. The Church has given us a great gift these days. We can walk with Jesus, growing closer to him and to each other as we observe this great festival of our faith. May our celebration of the Paschal Triduum help us break through our indifference and become united to Christ and to one another.

*Resurrexit sicut dixit!* Christ is risen as he said! This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad!

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph W. Tobin" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop of Newark

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## **Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Newark**

### **Easter Message**

This Sunday, we celebrate the great feast of Easter and we begin a season of joy.

A year ago, our celebration was muted by the pandemic, which had only begun to cause so much hardship. Over the past year we have witnessed serious illness and death, violence and social unrest, and the economic hardships faced by individuals, families, and communities here at home and throughout the world. Still, despite everything, a year ago, we celebrated the miracle of our Redeemer’s triumphant victory over sin and death!

If we could experience Easter joy a year ago, how much more jubilant we can be now, when there are clear signs of hope emerging all around us. But we’re not there yet. Many people are still suffering the loss of loved ones, unemployment, and fear and anxiety. Yet, there is hope. Christ is risen. He has transformed our suffering and made lasting peace and joy possible for our troubled world.

Pope Francis often speaks of joy. With characteristic bluntness, the pope says that Christians should not look like sourpusses (literally “vinegar faces” in the original Spanish). We should rejoice in our

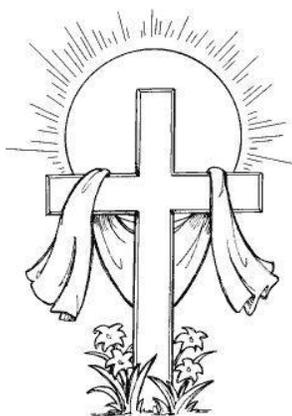
freedom and remain confident in God's love for us. The joy of Easter springs from our gratitude to God for God's saving grace, God's forgiveness of our sins, and God's presence in our lives.

While natural disasters, pandemics, and hardships of every kind persist, Easter celebrates the great mystery that they can no longer condemn us to lives of misery and doom. Whatever our present circumstances, we rejoice at Easter time – because the Lord is risen and remains close to us now and always.

Even in dark moment, Easter joy gives us the confidence we need to overcome our anxious fears. God has reached out to us and loved us. We are not alone. Although “social distancing” is still in effect, we remain the gathering of God's people, the Church, united in Christ. We need not be afraid. God is with us always.

Christ's resurrection is the source of our hope. May this season of grace bring us lasting joy. Please share this joy generously with others during this blessed time and always!

*Happy Easter!*



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## A Message from Pope Francis: Words of Challenge and Hope

*From the Holy Father's 2020 Easter Message, Urbi et Orbi*



Dear brothers and sisters,

Indifference, self-centeredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time. We want to ban these words forever! They seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives.

May Christ, who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of his glorious day, a day that knows no end.

With these thoughts, I would like to wish all of you a happy Easter.

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### My Prayer for You

May our celebration of the Paschal Triduum bring us closer to you, Lord. May we share in your suffering by accompanying you on the Way of the Cross. But may we also share in your victory over sin and death through the joy of the Resurrection.



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

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### Holy Week Services Near Your

Archdiocese of Newark parishes welcome you home to celebrate the Lord's Passion and Resurrection. Find Triduum and Easter Mass options by visiting individual parish websites or [www.rcan.org/parish-mass-livestreams-and-more](http://www.rcan.org/parish-mass-livestreams-and-more).

Pray with Cardinal Tobin during Holy Week and join via livestream:

- Holy Thursday, Thursday, April 1 at 7:30 p.m. (*bilingual liturgy*)
- Good Friday, Friday, April 2 at 3:00 p.m.
- Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 3 at 8:30 p.m. (*bilingual liturgy*)



Livestreams with Cardinal Tobin are online at:

- [Facebook.com/NwkArchdiocese](https://www.facebook.com/NwkArchdiocese) or [Facebook.com/SacredHeartCathedralBasilica](https://www.facebook.com/SacredHeartCathedralBasilica)
- [Youtube.com/NwkArchdiocese](https://www.youtube.com/NwkArchdiocese) or [Youtube.com/SacredHeartCathedralBasilica](https://www.youtube.com/SacredHeartCathedralBasilica)

