



Consolata Missionaries
2018 Easter Message

“Remove the stone”: Christ is risen, proclaim it with your life!

An Easter to be prepared, celebrated and lived!

Easter summarizes all the action of God who out of love has sent us his Son. He has fulfilled salvation. It is the summit of the Old and New Testaments. This is why Easter is considered «the feast of feasts», «to which all the mysteries of our religion converge» (S. Leone Magno). He also has an explicit reference to the Mission. The Risen One says to the first people he meets: «Go to announce it»; and to the apostles: «As the Father has sent me, even so I send you»; and before ascending to heaven: «Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature» (John 20,21; Mark 16,15).

Blessed Joseph Allamano

Very dear missionaries, confreres and sisters, relatives, friends and benefactors;

The loud, exhausted and desperate cry of Christ on the cross reminds us of all our human fears in the face of death. But compassion, the desire to rise again and find each other will prevail.

“Remove the stone” is Jesus’ cry before the tomb of his friend Lazarus. The stone represents our doubts and disbelieves before a Jesus who has won the death of his friend Lazarus and also that of each man. The stone coincides with our sin, which intrudes between us and God separating us, moving us away from him with the intent of letting us rot. The stone concretizes our selfishness that closes in on ourselves, not making us fully free to the point of making us die.

Meeting Jesus in the Sacraments, in his Word, in prayer, in the community, in the mission, believing in him and remaining with him, is taking away the stone, rolling it over us, to resurrect and live the true life that the Lord offers us.

We choose to come out of our graves to return to live in Christ. We are made for the Resurrection, not for the death!

"Death and life", sings the ancient sequence, "they faced each other in a prodigious duel. The Lord of life was dead; but now, alive, triumphs". It is faith in the Resurrection. Faith that, according to the Gospel, little by little enters our hearts. Because this is the style of God: not to overwhelm us. It is a style that respects our freedom. It is a humble, silent style, hidden even in the greatest events of history. And indeed no one, according to the Gospel, has seen him rise from death. And above all, he does not rise according to the usual pictorial interpretive modules, with banners in his hand. John did not see the banners of Christ, he



saw few and poor things, which, by the way they were put, guarded a light for his heart: he entered and saw the bandages on the ground and the shroud that had been placed on his head, not on the ground with the bandages, but folded in a separate place, “he saw and believed”!

Few things and we transmit the light of the Resurrection as the great response of God, for the future generations, not only with words and songs, not only with lit candles and incense, but above all with our life. Removing, says St. Paul, all that is old yeast, to be new dough by laying down from our lives everything that refers to death, laying down shrouds and bandages, laying down everything that holds us back and prevents us, all that stifles the freedom and life of the children of God, laying down the signs of death.

Proclaim with your life that the Lord has risen!

Let us all repeat the Easter ritual: let us too find all that is ferment of hypocrisy, in us, in our community, in the Institute, in the Church, in society, with the commitment to remove it, and we will be a new dough.

Say it with your life that Christ is risen, let it be a sign of Jesus of Nazareth: “Lay the old man down and put on Christ”.

Christ has risen for us; it is wonderful to retrace the succession of manifestations of the Risen Lord in the Gospels: this coming out of the Lord from all sides. Jesus makes himself close, makes himself close to those who cry, to those who are travellers, to those who doubt, to those who seek, to those who are afraid and to all of them he gives a word of comfort, of consolation, of joy and resurrection. He has risen within the history of humanity, to be in the history of each of us.

It takes gardeners who love to make roses bloom.

“Gardeners for the masses of the poor are not found, if not very few, traveling through all the roads of the world, where who knows how many live and die as if they never were even born!” (Annalena Tonelli, lay missionary killed in Somalia in October 2003).

This is the invitation of Easter: to make what is human bloom again, to make hope flourish again, to make beauty flourish again, to take away the odour of death from this land of ours, to come out of calculations and let ourselves be led instead by love. The same love of God for each one of us, the same disproportion of the Easter promise that gives us this certainty: *they may well be able to snatch all the flowers, but they will not be able to prevent spring from returning as long as there are gardeners who love, the roses will continue to bloom!*

Let us remove the stone, let us say with our life that Christ is risen!

Good and Holy EASTER!

To all and every one of you: courage and forward in Domino!



FOR PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY REFLECTION

The Risen Jesus loves us: he is our Peace.

- *Do our communities know how to be communities in which we experience the joy of a true brotherhood, welcoming and including all, giving support in time of trouble, a place of true friendship, forgiveness and joy?*

To meet the Risen Jesus means to open up to every man.

- *Do we have in our hearts the joy of Easter, which makes us understand that the Risen One loves and wants every man to be saved, and therefore urges us to bear witness, not just with words, but with all of ourselves, in daily life, making us missionaries towards all?*
- *In our community do we meet the Risen Jesus in the Word, in the Sacraments, in the fraternal union, in communion with the brothers or something is wrong?*

Jesus faced death with all the possible trust in God and with a total love for the whole of humanity, doing in all and for all the will of the Father. This is why God raised him up and made him “the Lord of Hope”.

- *How do we today live sickness, pain, sufferings that are caused by our feeling defeated by evil?*
- *How is it possible to announce to the elderly, the sick, the disabled, the terminally ill, that he is going to meet the God of life who will give him the Resurrection?*
- *Seeing our brothers defeated by the adversities of life, by the problems that are not resolved, by the loss of trust in God and in themselves, how is it possible to support them and encourage them to be patient and not to be crushed, to remain open and confident facing courageously every day the difficulties of life?*
- *How can we develop an attitude of openness and trust towards weakness and fragility accepting the fact that God uses those who are weak to proclaim the Gospel?*

March 25, 2018, Palm Sunday

Fr. Stefano Camerlengo, IMC
General Superior

