

Holy Easter2021

Dear Sirs and Madames,

Easter reaches us again and it is a joy to be able to live it, at least in part "face-to-face", attending the celebrations in our churches, even with the limitations and attention still necessary.

We cannot forget that last year , it was not possible to do it.

We welcome this gift as a sign of hope that is placed in our personal and community life. Christian hope is never just a wish or a state of mind, a psychological or emotional situation, something linked only to the condition of a moment or to the temperament of a person, nor is it something illusory; rather it is the announcement of a true and real fact that bursts into history with a power that transforms and generates a future starting from a fulfillment.

These words are addressed to the women who go to the now empty tomb: "Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised ; he is not here "(Mk 16,6). Today let us hear them addressed to each of us, to our families, to our ecclesial communities, to the whole of society.

The joy and light of Easter is Christian hope: "Truly the Lord is risen" (Lk 24,34). Then it is possible to think and plan a new, credible and reliable future, because the novelty and the foundation is He, Jesus Christ, the Risen Crucifix. But our adherence to Faith is needed, our involvement in this "event" that really happened on this day, at Easter, is again announced and given to us.

I would like to address a special thought to those of you who have been most affected by the coronavirus that has characterized and tested us for over a year now. There are too many deaths and many people (from the elderly to children), families and categories who have lived and are experiencing suffering and difficulties in

terms of affections and for the economic and working consequences of the pandemic that dramatically mark Venice and its territory .

I still express my gratitude to the many who, in various sectors of civil life, not only out of duty, continue to give themselves with generosity and dedication in the service of society and in particular of the most fragile.

The Easter liturgy makes Christian hope resound: "The Lord is truly risen. Alleluia!". May the feast par excellence give us the certain hope of living forever in God.

Easter accompanies and sustains us in the difficult months that await us and is what underpins our thinking and our acting as believers and citizens.

I wish a Holy Easter founded in the risen Christ, a hope that does not disappoint!

□ Francis, patriarch