



Beloved Brothers and Sisters,

In this Holy Week, as we gather at the foot of the cross and the opening to the tomb, I am reminded of the grace with which we are called to live our daily lives. It can be, more often than not, an overwhelming realization. Our risen Christ is not to be found at either location. He is no longer crucified, no longer buried. We look around just to make sure, though, don't we?

The Holy Spirit that He has left to abide within us nudges, prods—sometimes uncomfortably—at our humanity. At times we push back, and we struggle with the call to live the grace as Jesus did. Therein enters the beauty of the Gospel, of the Good News, of the Risen Christ.

I reflect on the life of our Savior who for 33 years walked among us, taught us, healed us. I think about His time imprisoned, tortured, hungry, and denied. I feel the weight of my calling and I pause. I take comfort in the risen Christ I serve—for the road is narrow but the burden light. I fall to my knees before the cross and lift my heart in prayerful thanks. It is a privilege to see His face in every refugee we help, in every member of our community we are able to aid.

Holy Week reminds us of that extraordinary power of the cross. Not only do we find forgiveness, we find conviction. Do we pick up the cross and follow Him? Do we die to self, do we surrender to the calling of our Savior? There is so much joy in this journey. In living our life in such a way that we reflect Christ, we find ourselves seeing Christ in everyone we meet.

Our life didn't end at the cross, it began anew. This invitation to new life brings us directly before the throne, it emboldens us to live a life of deeper courage, compassion and forgiveness. It equips us with God-sized plans and dreams. It drives us to lift our fellow man, to protect the most vulnerable, and to share the life-giving and life-affirming gospel to a world so desperately in need of it. I accept this call.

I challenge you to accept it with me. I pray for you and with you, that together we bring love and compassion, and become a port to those traversing the storms of violence, racism, torture and hunger.

Happy Easter. In this holiest of seasons, let us be both awed by the mystery of the resurrection, and renewed by the hope in our Savior.

Blessings to you and yours.

Rev. F. Feliberto Pereira