

Easter greeting 2018

Rejoice and Trust in the Risen Lord!

Pray in Solidarity with Pope Francis

for All and especially for the Church in China

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the Peace and Joy of the Risen Lord be with you all! My warm greetings especially to the newly baptized in our Diocese, and to all young people in this Diocesan Year of Youth!

I sincerely ask all to pray for one another, young and old alike, especially for the poor, the sick and the vulnerable, as well as for the Church in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

I thank all those who have so generously responded to my call to say, together with me, a special Prayer for the Church in China. Please continue to do so, in full solidarity with Pope Francis and for his intentions.

“O Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Lord of history. We humbly entrust to you the Church in China, joining in earnest prayer with Pope Francis and the Universal Church for unity of faith and love...”

As shown in the episode of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35) we should not be too surprised that the Risen Lord has all the while been walking near or accompanying us unrecognized by anybody but enlightening our minds and directing our paths even when we are preoccupied with “conversing and debating”.

He may even appear to leave us until invited to stay. It was fitting that, in the episode, it was with the breaking of the bread – the sacrament of unity of faith and love – that “their eyes were opened” (Luke 24: 31) and the two disciples recognized Jesus before he vanished from sight.

“Help us, Lord, to trust in and cling to you and the Rock upon which you have built your Church..”

Simon Peter was the Rock upon which Jesus built his Church (Matthew 16: 18). Luke tells us that the two disciples in the Emmaus story “set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, ‘the Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon !’” (Luke 24:33-34)

This special and personal appearance of the Risen Lord to Simon Peter, as also acknowledged by St Paul (1 Corinthians 15:5), formed part of the kerygmatic proclamation as reflected in Luke 24:34. This served to reassure the faithful that, despite his thrice-denial of Jesus, Peter was still the Rock and the one who would lead and confirm his brethren in the faith (cf. Luke 22:32).

Accordingly let us pray that we hold fast to this truth and have trust in the Successor of Peter as the Vicar of Christ and visible sign of the unity that the Lord has willed his Church.

“You have counted among the Blessed those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness. Out of their sacrificial love, may the Holy Spirit draw abundant fruit, including reconciliation, whether in or out of season....”

Jesus on the road to Emmaus patiently explained why it was “necessary” that the Messiah should suffer as he did and “enter into his glory” (Luke 24: 26). He was not thereby encouraging those who have earthly power to persecute him or his followers. Rather he is assuring those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness that the kingdom of God is theirs (Matthew 5: 10).

The Holy Spirit is able to draw good out of evil including peace and reconciliation on terms which do not contradict our faith (CCC 311). Let us pray that those who have unjustly suffered will not think or have any cause to think that their sacrifice has been in vain.

“Heavenly Father, may freedom of religion be respected and upheld in fuller measure throughout the land...”

At the beginning of the Galilean ministry, Jesus proclaimed his mission and vision by reference to Isaiah 61:1 in terms of being anointed by the Spirit of the Lord “to bring glad tidings to the poor”, “to proclaim liberty to captives”, “recovery of sight to the blind” and “to let the oppressed go free” and “to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord” (Luke 4: 18-19.)

His, however, was not a political agenda as the expression is commonly understood. Rather he was evoking the spirit of and the language used in proclaiming holy jubilee years.

Let us pray that the Church will enjoy freedom to bring the good news of salvation to all and to serve the poor without any undue hindrance and that the dignity of the human person will be upheld and protected.

Our Lady of Sheshan, pray for the Church in China! Mother of Mercy, pray for us!

In 2008 Pope Benedict XVI invoked this Marian title through his Prayer to Our Lady of Sheshan on the occasion of the World Day of Prayer for the Church in China on the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians (24 May) to whom the Shrine at Sheshan Basilica is dedicated.

In concluding this Easter Message I would simply add: May the Gospel be further preached to all the nations by those who devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. (Acts 1:14)

Rejoice, for the Lord has Risen. Alleluia!

**† Michael Yeung
Bishop of Hong Kong
2018 Easter Sunday**

2018 年復活節牧函
歡欣！信靠復活的主！
偕同教宗方濟各，同心特別為在中國的教會祈禱

主內親愛的弟兄姐妹：

願復活的主基督賜給你們喜樂與平安！謹代表香港教區向剛領受聖洗聖事的新教友，獻上由衷的歡迎。適逢教區「青年年」，也在此向所有青年致意！

懇請各教友，不論長幼，彼此為貧病者、弱勢人士祈禱，並為香港教區，以至海外教會，誠心祈禱。

感謝慷慨回應我早前的呼籲：為在中國的教會祈禱的每一位。懇請大家繼續，體現與教宗方濟各及其意向的完全共融。

「主，耶穌基督，祢是歷史的主宰。我們謙恭地將神州大地上的教會託付於祢，偕同教宗方濟各及普世教會，為信仰上的合一及愛德中的共融，獻上我們懇切的祈求。」

正如前往厄瑪烏路上，兩位門徒所遇到的事件一樣（路 24：13-35），我們不會感到驚訝：多少次，復活的主親自走近我們，與我們同行，我們卻沒有認出祂來。人生路上，當我們忙於「彼此談論」時，祂卻不斷啟迪我們，導引我們走該走的道路。

復活的主甚至好像要離我們而去，直至我們邀請祂留下來。就在擘餅的一刻，就在這「信與愛」的共融聖事中，門徒的「眼睛開了」（路 24：31），得以在耶穌隱沒於他們眼前之際，認出祂來。

「主，求祢助祐我們信賴及依靠祢，永不離棄祢在伯多祿磐石上所建立的教會。」

西滿伯多祿正是耶穌要在其上建立祂教會的「磐石」（瑪 16：18）。聖史路加告訴我們，兩位門徒在前往厄瑪烏路上認出復活的主以後，「立即動身，返回耶路撒冷，遇見那十一門徒及同他們一起的人，正聚在一起，彼此談論說：『主真復活了，並顯現給西滿了！』」（路 24：34）

正如聖保祿宗徒所確認（格前 15：5），復活的主曾私下顯現給西滿伯多祿，構成了路加「復活宣信」的一部份。為信友來說，這是有力的保證：儘管伯多祿三次否認主耶穌，他仍是那「磐石」，仍是由他去領導並堅固弟兄的信仰（路 22：32）。

因此，讓我們祈求持守這真理，信任伯多祿的繼承人——教宗，為基督在世的代表，以及耶穌所預許作教會團結合一的標記。

「祢曾說：為義而受迫害的人是有福的，求祢使所有為此而付出的犧牲，在聖神內，不論環境順逆，都能結出豐碩的成果，其中也包括寬恕與修和。」

在前往厄瑪烏的路上，耶穌給兩個門徒講解：默西亞「必須」受苦，才能「進入祂的光榮」。(路 24：26) 耶穌並非鼓勵地上有權勢者，去迫害祂或祂的跟隨者。相反，耶穌是向那為義而受迫害的人保證，「天國是他們的」。(瑪 5：10)

聖神，在不違背我們的信仰原則下，「能奇妙地從惡中引發出善」(《教理》311)。讓我們祈求那承受不義之苦的人，不至認為，或有任何理由致使他們以為，自己所作的犧牲是枉然的。

「慈悲的天父，願信仰自由在此神州大地上，能常獲得支持和受到尊重。」

耶穌開始在加里肋亞公開傳教生活時，就如依撒意亞先知所宣佈的：上主的神給他傳了油，派遣他向「貧窮人傳佈喜訊」，「向俘虜宣告釋放」，「向盲者宣告復明」，並宣佈「上主的恩慈之年」。(路 4：18-19)

耶穌並非如一般人所想的，提出一項政治議題。相反，祂呼求聖神，宣佈神聖禧年。

我們為教會祈禱。願教會能享有自由，將救恩的喜訊傳遍普世，並在服侍窮苦者時，不受任何有意無意的束縛，願人性尊嚴得以守護及秉持。

佘山聖母，請為在中國的教會祈禱！

仁慈之母，請為我們祈求！

2008年5月24日，聖母進教之佑瞻禮，教宗本篤十六世特向佘山聖母獻上祈禱；此舉配合「世界祈禱日」，為在中國的教會祈禱。

總結此復活節牧函，我願我們與「耶穌的母親瑪利亞並他的兄弟，同心合意地專務祈禱」的人，將福音更廣傳天下。(宗 1：14)

「歡欣！主已復活！亞肋路亞！」

**十楊鳴章
香港教區主教
二零一八年復活主日**