

The Bishop of Barbados

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BISHOP'S EASTER MESSAGE 2024

(To be shared at all Easter Day Services on March 31, 2024)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings on this Easter Day as we celebrate and acclaim that Jesus Christ is risen today. Our Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia! With hymns and psalms and spiritual songs we lift our voices this day, with approximately a third of the world's population, in praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for revealing, through His Son's resurrection, His omnipotence over injustice, evil, sin and death and that they will never, ever have the last say in our lives especially when we live in fellowship and communion with Him.

Every Easter, we are invited to look back, to reflect and recall the victory of Jesus, the victim, as we consider his glorious resurrection following the preceding 48 hours when he was betrayed, falsely accused, sentenced to death, severely beaten and tormented, crucified and buried. Easter invites us to look back and to once again take note of the greatest “come back” from all the suffering our Lord endured. While, not intervening as His Son became the victim of those who carried out His crucifixion, God vindicated Jesus to ultimately become the victor.

In our reflection this day, the Easter message is clear. God said, “Yes” to Jesus’ fulfillment of His divine purpose to offer God’s gifts of love and eternal life to all, and a definitive “No” to the powers of evil that sought to strip Him of His human dignity as He was dehumanized and crucified that Friday on the cross of Calvary. In and through Jesus’ resurrection, God declared His “Yes,” His joy and pleasure, in all that Jesus stood for, and for all that he embodied and taught. God was delighted with what Jesus did for the sake and wellbeing of humanity, and the way in which He lived and built up God’s Kingdom here on earth - a kingdom of justice and righteousness, of obedience and truth, of love, mercy and peace.

But the Easter message is deeper than merely looking back and recalling God’s “Yes” to Jesus. It is about God’s “Yes” to every victory of new life and light that triumphs over death and darkness which He has enabled us to experience through the blood, sweat and tears of those who were apostles and martyrs and civil rights activists. These people, who like Jesus, stood up, spoke out, and dedicated their lives for what was right in their efforts towards continually

building God's Kingdom on earth. They lived their God-given purposes, at great cost to their lives as they sought to repair the breach and advocate for justice and righteousness, truth, peace and love, human dignity and equality for all. We have every confidence that God said "Yes" to them and has raised them to greater life with Him in His eternal presence as He did for His Son Jesus Christ.

Easter also encourages us to look forward, to anticipate hearing God's "Yes" as we seek to live our lives in the hope of a joyful resurrection. Easter allows us to be inspired by Jesus' life as we contribute, by our words and actions of love, toward what is right and good in our society. Every Easter summons us to live daily by God's "Yes," yes to whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, restorative, promote human dignity and the wellbeing of all. It calls us to God's "No," no to whatsoever things are evil, unjust, false, corrupt, discriminatory, abusive, destructive and dehumanizing. This is the Easter message that we affirm this day.

On behalf of my family, I wish you and yours a blessed and joyous Easter season. May we be inspired to anticipate God's "Yes," as we endeavor always to live victoriously for Him.

I am your friend and bishop,

+Michael Barbados.