



天主教澳門教區  
DIOCESE DE MACAU

## **2019 H.E. Bishop Stephen Lee** **Easter Message**

**“The old has passed, the new has come.”**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

“Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come” (2 Cor 5:17).

“The old has passed away.” In the Lenten Season preceding Easter, we repent for our sins and prepare our hearts to celebrate the summit of the liturgical year. The sacred celebrations of the Pasch remind us that God saves the world through his love. Jesus Christ “has triumphed over death; he has overcome sorrow, anguish and the power of darkness” (St Josemaría Escrivá, Homily *Christ’s Presence in Christians*).

“Behold, the new has come.” In the Holy Father’s message for Lent this year, Pope Francis has invited us to behold and feel the healing power of the repentance and forgiveness that God gives us. The Holy Father has invited us to express in a concrete way - through fasting, prayer and good works - the Paschal Mystery, as we walk the path leading to Easter. This road is our way of living the virtues in our daily life. “That was what God planned: Jesus, dying on the cross, gave us the Spirit of truth and life. Christ stays in his Church, its sacraments, its liturgy, its preaching — in all that it does” (*ibid.*).

“Christ is alive.” This year is the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV’s Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*. The letter affirmed that holiness of life is greatly needed for the effectiveness of the apostolic mission. The Church has never “ceased to dispatch to every corner of the world her couriers of the doctrine God entrusted to her, and her ministers of the eternal salvation that was delivered through Christ to the race of men.” The teaching of the Pope continues to be relevant to the present world, bearing a message of renewal and progress.

*Christ is alive (Christus Vivit)* is the theme of Pope Francis’ Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation. As Saint Paul says, “Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Cor 5:17). “Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world, and everything he touches becomes young, new, full of life...Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive!” (*Christ is Alive*, 1).

Pope Francis has also said that in the work with the youth, all of us have to live a holy life in order to give hope to the young. “We must be holy to be able to invite young people to become so ... through the holiness of the young, the Church can renew her spiritual ardor and her apostolic vigor.” (see Document a.166-167). The Year of the Youth in our diocese has begun, and we are witnessing the active participation and response of the young parishioners who form the newly-established Diocesan Preparatory Committee for the Year of the Youth. They work for the Lord with zeal and promote evangelization. Aside from moving me, they are also a sign of the future of the Diocese, because the resurrected Jesus Christ accompanies us, bringing a lively future: “Behold, the new has come.”

Please continue to pray for all the initiatives for the youth. In different ways, promote, participate and accompany the different activities for the youth (literature, art, media, sports, social action, spirituality, etc.) at home, in schools, in the communities. Be of constant support and create for them an environment in which they will truly feel that “the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”

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