

## Easter Message 2016

Dear Sisters & Brothers:

I take this occasion to wish you and yours a very happy Easter and to wish you Easter blessings during the 50 days of Easter, the “Great Sunday”.

At the request of our Holy Father, we are celebrating the *Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*. May this Holy Year be a time of grace for each of us as we celebrate, experience and embrace the mercy of God towards us and become instruments of God’s mercy to others. Jesus said: “Be merciful just as your Father is merciful.” Once we have experienced God’s mercy and forgiveness we must become apostles of the mercy of God.

The reality of the mercy of God is present throughout the Old Testament. Time and again we see God being merciful to his people. But mercy is not just something that God does. Mercy is who God is. Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, is “the face of God’s mercy”; Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, is the mercy of God incarnate.

As women and men of faith, this year is given to us to live our faith with renewed conviction. Let us fix our eyes on the merciful heart of Jesus, and live lives as “missionary disciples”, evangelizers, revealing and radiating Christ to the “peripheries” of our world so much in need of change and transformation. Our welcoming of the refugees is a tangible expression of God’s mercy.

At this critical time in our country, we have been involved in defending human life. We continue to affirm that human life is sacred from conception to natural death. Over the past few months, we have endorsed the *Declaration Against Euthanasia and Doctor Assisted Suicide*, we have signed the *Petition for life*, and we have supported the campaign to protect the vulnerable and those who care for them. Please continue to be involved in all that supports and promotes human life.

As Christians, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. We know that we too are destined for eternal life, won for us in and through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Let us pray for each other as well as for all those who will be touched by the mercy of God during this year, asking that Mary, the Mother of Mercy, intercede for us.

Easter blessings on you and yours. You will be remembered as I celebrate the Paschal Vigil and the Mass on Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of the Lord.

“Christ is risen, alleluia! Indeed He is truly risen, alleluia!”

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ 

✠ Robert Harris  
Bishop of Saint John