



March 1, 2017

To all the faithful of the Diocese of Prince Albert,

Greetings of peace and joy of the Lord!

Soon we will be journeying through Holy Week. As Christ's faithful, we believe this is the most important week of the Christian faith. Beginning with Palm Sunday, we cheer on Jesus as he enters the holy city of Jerusalem. "Hosanna to the King!" we cry out, proclaiming him King as he rides on a donkey.

A few days later, Jesus gathers his disciples for the feast of Passover. He begins this observance by washing the feet of his disciples, exemplifying our first calling – to serve. Jesus continues to transform this simple yet extraordinary meal by offering the gift of himself to the world through the breaking of the bread and by the sharing of the cup, which eventually become his body and blood, the gift of his life to us. **'Do this in memory of me'** Jesus says to them and continues to say to us today.

Over the many hours following the Passover meal, Jesus will be apprehended, questioned, scourged, and judged to be crucified. From the cross, he forgives not only the thief but also the spectators witnessing the cruel event. He exclaims, "Father forgive them for they do not know what they do." Eventually, Jesus dies and is buried. However, this is not the end but only the beginning, as Christ rises from the dead and solidifies the foundation of our faith. Like St. Paul would say, "The empty tomb of Easter morning!"

Accordingly, Jesus' passing from death to new life is the story of our faith, of our lives. The Spirit that Jesus gave on the day of his resurrection was the gift the apostles needed then and all of us continue to need now to understand salvation. Salvation is God's response to our sins out of love, and that is why he sent us his Son.

Jesus' life is the story of salvation. He heals the sick, gives sight to the blind, cures the lepers, chases out demons, and raises his friend from the dead. Jesus' salvation is freeing us from the servitudes of our daily lives to live in the freedom of being a child of God. We must trust and believe in God's transforming power in our lives through Christ. It too is like death to new life. The Spirit of God gives us this faith. Forgiveness of sin is the experience of our faith in the saving power of Jesus Christ.

Not only did Christ do miracles to show us what is salvation but through his teachings and witness, he gave us the principles of salvation. Love, respect, forgiveness, and mercy bring hope to the people around us. Our actions and our deeds, our presence and our words of comfort, help to change the lives of others and of our own. It is in helping those around us that we begin to move out of the darkness of our

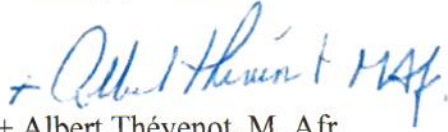
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*'To help our people rediscover Christ, the incarnate word of God because we are all called to holiness'*

own lives and into the light of Christ. Ultimately, this change becomes a sign of salvation for those of us who make the change and for those who our change influences, for He serves through us and we trust in Him.

Easter is New Life and our Salvation!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



+ Albert Thévenot, M. Afr.  
Bishop of Prince Albert

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