



Most Reverend Martin de Porres Griffin
Office of the Presiding Bishop
The American Catholic Church Diocese of California
3900 Cleveland Avenue
San Diego, California 92104
Phone: (619) 400-3902
bpmartindeporres@americancatholicchurch.org

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Easter Message 2020

Alleluia, Alleluia, Christ is risen! Let us rejoice and be glad!

Peace and all good things be yours!

We celebrate this most holy and special season of Easter this year during a time of worldwide illness, quarantine, unemployment, economic crisis, and death. In the midst of all of the fear, uncertainty, and sadness of our current situation, Easter is reminder to us of new life, rising from death to life, and God's love for humanity. God so loves this world that he sent His son, Jesus, to show us the way to him. Jesus has won salvation for us by his suffering, death and resurrection from the dead.

During the season of Lent we took time to reflect on our humanity, our morality, our sinfulness, and our need for repentance and forgiveness. We took time to practice the corporal works of mercy: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick, visiting the imprisoned, and burying the dead. Now as we have arrived at the Easter season we rejoice and celebrate newness of life, the joy of salvation, and the glory of the promise of resurrection for each of us who believe.

This year we have truly experienced Lent. The pandemic has caused the whole world to retreat from our day-to-day social routines and to stay home. Our retreat to our homes called us to focus on and preserve our individual health, not pass the virus to others, and to "flatten the curve" of the spread of this virus. During Lent we are to focus in on our spiritual health and wellbeing, avoid sin, avoid neglecting others by acts of charity, and attempting to "flatten the curve" of the spiritual sickness of sin - in our words, actions and deeds. This Easter we can surely say we have had the opportunity to prepare ourselves. We have had the time to step back and look at how important others are to us. Due to the isolation of quarantine, we may better realize how we take for grant others who are in our lives, especially our families. During this quarantine families have had to spend time together, sit at the table and eat together, and help the young with their learning and studies. Those who have had the opportunity to telework have seen the importance of communication to get their jobs done; and have learned new ways to connect. We have had to

reach out to our elders and tend to their wellbeing and cherish them. The quarantine does not have to be about isolation. In fact it has caused many to open their hearts to become better servants to their family members, elders, coworkers, and community members. We have realized that the church is not a building, but people. Many of us have asked ourselves: what can I do? The answer has been for some reach out to others and check on their wellbeing, pray for others, breaking bread with family in ways we have not broken bread in a long time.

We will get through this COVID-19 pandemic. Our world will experience a truly new life, new way of being, a **RESURRECTION**. We will rise up this Easter season as stronger people, more appreciative people, and hopefully more loving children of the One God.

We have prayed and sung many times: “Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the earth.” May the Risen Christ open our eyes to the new life he gives to us in our faith, and may the Holy Spirit truly come and renew the face of the earth!

Be blessed! I remain

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol (+) followed by the name "Martin de Porres Griffin" in a cursive script.

The Most Reverend Martin de Porres Griffin
Presiding Bishop
American Catholic Church Diocese of California