

April 2018

Christ is Risen! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Dear Friends,

In my Christmas message to you, I spoke of the Light of Christ that broke through the darkness. Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. During his life on earth, many came to believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Imagine now if you can, their disappointment when he died on the cross! That light which had come into the world seemed to have gone out...but we know that the light continues to shine.

At the Easter Vigil, we celebrate the light of Christ through the blessing and the lighting of the Paschal Candle. From this candle, on that night of nights, the light of Christ slowly spreads through the Church. The light of Christ is alive in the Church. We also renew our baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil as a sign of our renewed commitment to live as Christian witnesses in the world.

In parishes throughout the Archdiocese, many adults and children enter the Roman Catholic Church, after many months of preparation through the sacrament of Baptism. They receive the light of Christ from that same Paschal Candle and make their promise to live a Christian life. As a community of disciples, we are overwhelmed with joy at the rebirth of these newest members of the Church. The newly baptised are fully initiated through Confirmation and First Eucharist. Their presence is a sign of new life. In fact, they are called “new sprouts” or neophytes.

These “new sprouts” are like the children in our Catholic Schools, who come to our schools in search of the Risen Lord. They encounter the Lord in the teachers and staff and also in each other. They encounter the Risen Lord in the Word of God and in the Sacraments. On their journey of faith I hope that they too will come to know and believe in Christ; to follow where He leads them.

I pray that this Easter Season be a time of growth and joy in the Risen Lord!

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton