

## C.W.L. Easter Message 2017

“Do not be afraid, I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised, just as he said.” These words come from the Gospel of St. Matthew and were addressed to the women who went to the tomb in the early morning to anoint the body of Jesus. They were reassured, when they did not find the body, that He was raised - and that they should now go and tell His disciples that they will see Him in Galilee.

This story from the scriptures is about new life. It is appropriate that at Easter we celebrate new life. We celebrate the new life that Christ won for us through His death on the cross, and we celebrate the new life that springs forth as we share in this springtime season of the year. This new life is what inspires us as members of the Catholic Women’s League to reach out in the name of Jesus to others. It excites us with joy and it prompts us to action and to generosity in our relationship with others.

We know that life is a precious gift. It is fitting that at Easter we are given an opportunity to give thanks for this great gift and to deepen our appreciation of this gift that we share. Each new born baby in a family, is a sign of new blessings and joy. Each sprouting new flower or plant is a sign of God’s wonder in creation. Each day that we share in the ups and downs of everyday living, we are truly blessed as life is shared among people in common concern and support for each other. We know however that not all life is happy and that trials touch our daily lives. We are able to overcome these trials through the grace that the life from the risen Christ give us. Easter is also the feast of that grace.

As we gather in many ways this Easter, as families, as faith communities, as neighbours, let us give thanks for the great gift of ‘life’ that has been given to us. Let us consider how precious and awesome it truly is. Let us be determined in our efforts to protect and safeguard this gift, in each and every person, from the first moment of conception of a new child to the eldest of our senior citizens. As members of the Catholic Women’s League we know that this is a priority for us. We know that in many ways this gift of life is threatened and diminished in value in our secular world today. Nevertheless, in the gift of life, we touch the life of God and it is for us a foretaste of the life that God has prepared for us in the eternal kingdom.

Let us 'not be afraid' when we feel discouraged or upset, but let us look to Jesus, who reassured the women at the tomb, and who is the giver of life which we find in each other. If we do this, we will truly experience the Easter joy that this unique and most important feast brings. A holy and joyful Easter to all!

Sincerely,  
Most Rev. Fred J. Colli  
Bishop of Thunder Bay