



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

April 7, 2017

When we reflect upon the Resurrection of Our Lord, a word that comes to mind is amazement. All of those individuals who encountered the Risen Lord, or heard about the Resurrection, were truly amazed. Amazement is the overwhelming of the mind by something beyond expectation. This is very different than simply being shocked, which is to be surprised by something very unpleasant. Unfortunately, many of us experience far more shock than amazement.

We see from the Resurrection account that amazement leads to joy and shock leads to sorrow. Mary Magdalene was initially shocked when she came to the tomb and found it empty. She wept tears of sorrow because she thought somebody had taken the body of Jesus. When Mary encountered the Risen Lord, she was truly amazed and her sadness turned to overwhelming joy. She then had to share her joy with others as she announced, "I have seen the Lord".

Today we live in a world where we are shocked more often than we are amazed. We need to be overwhelmed by things beyond expectation rather than be surprised by what is unpleasant. The Resurrection teaches us that God wishes to amaze us rather than create shock and all we need to do is open our eyes and ears.

During our Easter celebrations let us take a moment to be amazed. Look at nature and the beauty of life springing forth in bud and leaf, the love of family and friends, and the goodness of God. Listen to the sounds of harmony, words of encouragement, and power of silence. There are simply so many amazing things around us and all we need to do is recognize them and give thanks.

It is my hope and prayer that, like Mary Magdalene, we will encounter the Risen Lord in the world, each other, and in the Easter liturgies throughout our diocese. May we all be truly amazed by what we experience and share the Good News with others: "I have seen the Lord".

May Our Risen Lord grant you a grace-filled Easter.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerard Bergie".

Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.
Bishop of St. Catharines