



BISHOP GREG'S EASTER MESSAGE 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters

In Arthurian and German legends, the search for the Holy Grail, the Chalice used by Our Lord at the Last Supper, gives a focus to many stories of chivalry and love. The knight Parsifal figures in both sets of legends. Richard Wagner takes the German version of the Parsifal story as the subject of his final opera.

The central moment of the opera takes place on Good Friday. Parsifal has been instructed in the spiritual meaning of Our Lord's death, and after an intense experience of Our Lord's passion, the young knight's world changes. Painting the scene with some of the most beautiful music ever composed, Wagner invites us into the transformation which happens to Parsifal. After Good Friday he sees the world and himself in an entirely different way, he sees through the eyes of God.

This year our Good Friday and Holy Saturday have been profoundly difficult. We have experienced loss, fear of the unknown, death, emptiness, isolation and loneliness. Each of these is an authentic Good Friday or Holy Saturday experience. We are taken to places in our soul which we would normally avoid. Social distancing has forced us to spend more time alone with ourselves, suffering these experiences. I pray that like Parsifal our sensitivity and perception might undergo an Easter transformation. That we might see the hand of our loving Father in creation, in others and within our own hearts.

On the first Easter Sunday, Mary Magdalene, Peter and John, gather around the empty tomb. Mary and Peter are perplexed. John looks in, sees an empty tomb and believes that Jesus is risen. He alone amongst the disciples knows what has happened. He sees what is not visible, his vision has been transformed. Oh that we might be changed as St John was changed.

In my daily Mass I pray for you, that you, your family and friends may have God's protection, that those working to care for the sick may be safe, and that we might soon be able to live in the freedom which we once knew.

I wish you a happy and blessed Easter. The Lord is risen, He is Truly Risen.

***Most Revd Greg Homering OCD
Bishop of Lismore***