



**Chancery Office
Eparchy of New Westminster**

**PASTORAL LETTER OF THE MOST REVEREND KEN NOWAKOWSKI,
BISHOP OF NEW WESTMINSTER ON THE OCCASION OF THE FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION OF
OUR LORD 2019**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ!

Christ is Risen!

We have come to the end of our Lenten journey and completed the Great Fast. During Holy Week we have tried to follow Jesus on his way of the Cross. As we listened to the Passion story maybe we told ourselves that, unlike most of the Apostles, we would have followed Jesus to the very end. In actual fact, but for hindsight we too would have been traumatized by His arrest, trial, torture and crucifixion. We too would have thought about all that we had given up to follow the Lord and now had nothing to go back to. Maybe we would have thought about keeping our heads low in order to avoid arrest and possibly suffer a similar fate. And on Sunday morning would we have had the courage to go to the tomb? Only a handful of his female followers did, because for them it was the right thing to do, no matter what! As there was no time to prepare the body of Jesus for burial before the Sabbath, at first light after the Sabbath they rose and went to the tomb to fulfill the burial duties for Him...

We can only imagine the shock and surprise, the depth of emotion and disbelief at finding the tomb empty, the suspicion and even anger at the thought that someone might have stolen His precious body. But when they were told "He is risen!" their emotion slowly turned into realization, understanding and joy: "Oh, this is what He said would happen!" So, they ran to tell the others to let them know what they saw and heard. And, of course, they encountered skepticism and doubt, even though it was what Jesus had foretold.

We encounter that same skepticism and doubt still today when we speak of our Lord's Resurrection, but we are compelled to share the good news that "Christ is risen!" nonetheless. Faced with doubt, the devout women did not stop bearing witness to the Resurrection. We are called to do the same. Let us, therefore, proclaim it with conviction and determination, and let not only what we say but what we do show that we are truly disciples of the Risen Lord.

Let us rejoice that Christ is Risen from the dead and by His death he has conquered death and to those in the tombs giving life!

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

May the blessings of the Risen Lord be with all of you!

+Ken (Nowakowski)