



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

April 2016
Easter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In our celebration of the joy of Easter this year I can't help but remember how the blood of Jesus was poured out on Good Friday. The blood that flowed from a heart that was filled with love and understanding; it fell by drops into the earth where it was given back to God. The blood that flowed from the crown of thorns that pierced his head; it was so often bowed in prayer or raised when he was teaching the multitude how God blesses those who mourn, or who are peacemakers, or who suffer. On Good Friday this precious blood of God's own Son was poured out and, along with his blood, the words that poured from his lips, "It is finished. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

How precious is that blood that was poured out on account of human weakness! How precious is that blood that caused the soldier at the foot of the Cross to say, "Truly, this was the son of God," for he saw that everything Jesus said and taught was not just words, but, when it really mattered, Jesus died as he lived, with the words of forgiveness and assurance on his lips. And all the while that precious blood flowed from the wounds we inflicted on him.

This Easter Day remember and give thanks for the Precious Blood of Jesus. His sacrifice was accounted worthy and fulfills all others. His resurrection from the dead gives us hope that while we experience the sufferings of the present day all humanity has received a teaching that is trustworthy. Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, overcomes the power of evil with a final victory over death itself. The Precious Blood that was poured out on Calvary's hill is mingled with the blood that is shed in every war, every crime, every tragic accident, every transmission of life – every human moment is washed in the Blood of Divine Mercy.

May the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ who has overcome the enemy of Faith, the enemy of Hope and the enemy of Love bring us to a new appreciation of his sacrificial love. Let this Easter bring us closer to that vision in the Sacred Scriptures, "I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth."

In peace and in the fullness of Easter's promise I wish you the fullness of Easter joy!

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D.
Bishop of Manchester