



## Easter Message 2023

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We think of the word “Easter” as a noun, but the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins once used it as a verb. “Let him Easter in us,” Hopkins wrote in his 1875 poem “The Wreck of the Deutschland,” in which he recounted a shipwreck off the English coast that resulted in the death of five Franciscan nuns.

I was taught that a verb is an action word or one that expresses a state of being. It is intriguing to think of Easter as a verb, as something that is present and active here and now. Of course, we know that Easter refers to the great mystery of Jesus rising from the dead, bursting out of the tomb after having died on the cross for our salvation. But Hopkins’ use of Easter as a verb reveals another level of meaning: to say “let him Easter in us” is to proclaim that we share in the great mystery and victory of Christ. We are not mere spectators at the foot of the cross or at the empty tomb. Easter is not for Christ alone but is shared with all who believe in him. To have him “Easter in us” is to know there is something more to life than this human life, and something beyond death – that the grave does not have the last word. To have him “Easter in us” is to be freed from sin so as to live a new life for God.

Whatever troubles and worries may oppress us, whatever challenges afflict the Church and the world, we have a new way of being because Christ rose from the dead. That is Easter as a verb; something that impacts our entire life and the way we act in the world. To paraphrase the poet, may Christ Easter in you during this holy season and always.

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Daniel Miehm  
Bishop of Peterborough