



Kyo.Prot.N. 43/2020

To the Catholics of the Kyoto Diocese

## **AN EASTER 2020 MESSAGE FROM BISHOP OTSUKA OF KYOTO**

I wish I could greet you as usual this Easter, but as the global catastrophe of the new coronavirus infection continues, this year is not a situation in which we can truly share joyful greetings. That is even more reason for us to renew our faith in the Lord's resurrection and give thanks to the Lord God, the source of life, for the gift of salvation.

The theme of Pope Francis' visit to Japan last year was "Protect all Life", and now the whole world is struggling to protect all life. We have become keenly aware that protecting life requires the cooperation and sacrifice of many people.

The theme of Lent 2020 was "Renewed by the Holy Spirit" but Lent itself became a time of trial as Masses were suspended. Let us use this ongoing difficult time to think anew about our faith that is nourished by the Mass and the Eucharist.

Brothers and Sisters, as Pope Francis has called for, let us keep in mind the importance of praying together during this pandemic crisis facing the world. Let us pray for the repose of those who have died from this illness. Let us pray as well for those who are infected and those who are being treated that they may have a quick and complete recovery. And let us pray for those who provide health care.

Let us recite the Prayer for the World Suffering from the New Coronavirus Pandemic presented by our bishops. We are united by our bond as Church, the Body of Christ. As individuals and as a Catholic Church, let us keep praying without losing faith in the power of prayer even though we cannot celebrate the Mass.

My chief hope is that we can offer every sacrifice as an act of love for our neighbor so that we do not spread the infection. The purpose of the Kyoto Diocese in refraining from Mass is to "protect all life" by avoiding the possibility of our unknowingly becoming a source of infection and putting others at risk.

Whatever comes, let us trust in God's mercy and renew our faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ who is with us. Let us pray that this disease will soon pass and that the people of the world may again live in security. Let us pray through the intercession of Mary, our loving mother, and St. Joseph, the defender of the Church.

April 11, Vigil of Easter 2020

+ *Paul Yoshinao Otsuka*

✠ Paul Yoshinao Otsuka  
Bishop of Kyoto