



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER

JOHN PAUL II

TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE EASTER VIGIL MASS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the end of the Lenten penitential journey and after having meditated in these last days on the sorrowful passion and dramatic death of Jesus on the Cross, we are celebrating on this singular night the glorious mystery of his Resurrection.

Thanks to television, I am able to follow from my apartment the suggestive Easter Vigil, over which Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger is presiding in St Peter's Basilica. To him, I send my fraternal greeting, which I extend to the other Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops present. I also greet with affection the priests, men and women religious and the faithful gathered around the altar of the Lord, with a special thought for the catechumens who prepare themselves during this holy Vigil to receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

This night is truly extraordinary, one in which the blazing light of the Risen Christ definitively defeats the dark power of evil and death, and rekindles hope and joy in the hearts of believers. Dear friends, guided by the liturgy, let us pray to the Lord Jesus so that the world may see and recognize that, thanks to his passion, death and Resurrection, what was destroyed is rebuilt, what was ageing is renewed and completely restored, more beautiful than ever, to its original wholeness.

I warmly express to all my fervent best wishes, and I assure you of a remembrance in my prayers so that the Risen Lord bestows on each of you and your families and communities the paschal gift of his peace. I accompany these sentiments with a special Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 26 March 2005, Easter Vigil.