

A Pastoral Letter from the Bishops of Regina

Blessings to all in Saskatchewan.

While many people in our province are preparing to celebrate our second Easter weekend under pandemic restrictions, as the Anglican, Lutheran, and Catholic bishops serving the Regina area, we want to offer a word of blessing, a word of caution, and a word of hope.

Christ is the Word of blessing who speaks to the world his promise that life will triumph over death. The whole world is suffering from a virus that has killed millions, paralyzed our society, and left an invisible toll in the form of mental and physical health issues, domestic abuse, and isolation from our families and friends. To this world of suffering, Christ joins his own suffering. Sharing in our struggles, he transforms even death into redemption.

As we celebrate this holiest time in our year, we are drawn to family and friends, but we must remain cautious. Now is not the time to expand our social interactions. We call upon all people in the Regina region to stay within their household bubbles over the next weeks. Find electronic ways to stay connected with friends and family, join in virtual worship, work at home if possible, do not travel within the province or elsewhere, limit shopping to the essentials, use curbside pickup or delivery wherever possible, wear a mask, sanitize your hands frequently, and seriously consider getting the vaccine when that becomes possible for you.

Over the past year, we have worked hard with public health officials and other faith leaders to develop effective protocols for faith communities. We support these and other measures to stop the spread of the virus in our population. We support efforts to reduce general movement within society and to limit the occasions for transmission. In our homes, workplaces, and churches, please follow all public health orders and recommendations.

To this, we offer a word of sincere thanks and gratitude to leaders, health workers, carers, counsellors, emergency responders, aid agencies, restaurateurs, teachers, delivery and personnel drivers, farmers and cleaners. Your combined sacrifice is deeply appreciated. Thank you.

And, we offer a word of hope. In the mystery of Easter, Christ turns death into life. We do not know how God is working through our pandemic suffering, but our faith proclaims that God will find good amongst the pain and will take the ashes of our long Lenten journey and turn them into new life. Christ dies on Good Friday, but he rises again on the third day. This is the mystery of Easter, which we live as people of faith.

May you all enjoy the blessings of Easter and stay healthy.

Bishop Bryan Bayda, Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon

Archbishop Donald Bolen, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina

Bishop Robert Hardwick, Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle

Bishop Sid Haugen, Saskatchewan Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada