



The Ecumenical Catholic Servants of The Good Shepherd, ECSGS
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

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Easter Pastoral Letter 2026

Diocese of the Ecumenical Catholic Servants of the Good Shepherd

“Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.” (Luke 24:5)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Risen Savior and the Good Shepherd of all God’s people.

In the stillness of that first Easter morning, when grief and uncertainty filled the hearts of the disciples, the angel proclaimed the words that changed the history of the world forever: **“He is not here; He has risen.”**

With these words, God revealed a truth that continues to echo across every generation: **death does not have the final word, darkness cannot overcome the light, and despair will never triumph over hope.** This is the message that the Church proclaims again today. Christ is risen. And because Christ is risen, **history itself is transformed.**

Easter in a Time of Uncertainty

This Easter arrives during a time of deep concern for many people in our nation and throughout the world.

In recent months we have witnessed growing divisions within societies, political tensions that strain the fabric of democracy, and leadership styles that often leave many feeling unheard or marginalized. Around the world we hear increasing talk of conflict and the terrible possibility of wider wars that threaten the lives of countless innocent people.

At the same time, families everywhere are struggling with the burdens of daily life. The rising cost of fuel and basic necessities has placed pressure on working families. Housing and food prices continue to increase. Many live with the fear of losing employment or the insecurity of an uncertain economic future.

These realities weigh heavily on the hearts of many in our communities.

Yet the message of Easter reminds us that **the Christian faith is never rooted in fear, but in hope.** When the women went to the tomb on that first Easter morning, they expected to encounter death. Instead, they encountered **the beginning of a new creation.**

The Resurrection of Christ is God's definitive answer to every form of darkness that humanity experiences. It tells us that **no injustice, no violence, no political power, and no suffering can ultimately defeat the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.**

The Church's Prophetic Responsibility

In moments of historical uncertainty, the Church must remain faithful to her mission.

The Church is not called to serve political interests or ideological movements. Instead, the Church is called to proclaim the truth of the Gospel and defend the dignity of every human person.

Whenever human life is threatened by violence, whenever the poor are ignored, whenever the stranger is rejected, or whenever war places innocent lives in danger, the Church must respond with the voice of the Good Shepherd who protects His flock. The Resurrection reminds us that our calling as Christians is to become **builders of peace, defenders of human dignity, and witnesses of compassion** in a wounded world.

The words of the prophet Isaiah remain as urgent today as they were centuries ago: (*Isaiah 1:17*)

"Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow."

Signs of the Resurrection in Our Diocese

Even amid the challenges of our time, I see many powerful signs that the Risen Christ continues to walk among us.

I see it in the **faithful dedication of our clergy**, who continue to shepherd their communities with humility, sacrifice, and pastoral love.

I see it in the **service of our parish councils, volunteers, and ministry leaders**, whose generosity sustains the life of the Church in ways that are often unseen but deeply transformative.

I see it in the ongoing **discernment and renewal at Saint Matthew Parish**, where clergy and lay leaders are working together with courage and prayer to strengthen the future of that community.

I see it in the extraordinary **resilience of our immigrant families**, whose faith, devotion, and perseverance remind us that the Church truly belongs to all people and all nations.

Your faith, your sacrifices, and your commitment to the Gospel are living signs that the Resurrection is not merely an event of the past but **a living reality among us today.**

A Church Without Borders

The Diocese of the Ecumenical Catholic Servants of the Good Shepherd is blessed to be part of a truly global community of faith.

Our fellowship extends beyond the borders of the United States to our brothers and sisters in mission communities throughout the world, including the **Philippines, India, Ukraine, Russia, Brazil, and many parts of Latin America.**

In regions marked by poverty, conflict, displacement, and social instability, our communities continue to proclaim the Gospel with courage and hope. Their witness reminds us that the Church of Christ is **one body across all nations**, united not by political borders but by faith in the Risen Lord.

As Saint Paul reminds us: (1 Corinthians 12:26)

“If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.”

Looking Toward Our Joint Synod in New Orleans

This Easter season also invites us to look forward with hope to an important moment in the life of our Church.

In June of this year, the **Joint Synod of the HCC and the Diocese of the Ecumenical Catholic Servants of the Good Shepherd** will gather in New Orleans.

A synod is not merely an administrative meeting. It is a sacred moment in which the People of God gather to **listen together to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.**

During this time, we will reflect on the future of our Church, discerning how we may:

- strengthen our communities of faith
- encourage new vocations and leadership
- expand our mission both locally and internationally
- and proclaim the Gospel with renewed courage in a changing world.

I ask every parish and mission within our diocese to pray fervently that this synod may become a moment of **renewal, unity, and spiritual vision** for our shared mission.

The Resurrection and Our Mission Today

The Resurrection of Christ does not simply comfort us—it **sends us forth.**

Just as the Risen Lord sent Mary Magdalene and the disciples to proclaim the Good News, He sends each of us to become witnesses of hope in our own communities.

In a world marked by division, we are called to be **instruments of reconciliation.**

In a society wounded by injustice, we are called to be **voices of compassion and dignity.**

In times of fear and uncertainty, we are called to be **bearers of hope.**

The Gospel reminds us that the light of Christ shines most brightly precisely when the world seems darkest.

A Word of Gratitude

I wish to express my deep gratitude to the many faithful people who sustain the life of our diocese:

To our clergy who serve tirelessly in pastoral ministry.

To our parish leaders, volunteers, and councils who give their time and talents generously.

To our immigrant communities whose faith enriches the life of our Church.

And to all the faithful who continue to support the mission of Christ through prayer, service, and sacrifice. You are the living witnesses of the Resurrection in our midst.

Easter Blessing

Dear brothers and sisters, the message of Easter is clear: **Christ is alive.**

And because Christ lives, hope lives.

May the Risen Lord fill your homes with peace.

May He strengthen those who are burdened by hardship.

May He comfort those who suffer.

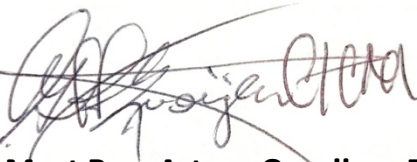
May He guide our Church as we prepare for our upcoming synod.

And may He renew our Diocese so that we may continue to serve the world as faithful **Servants of the Good Shepherd.**

Christ is Risen!

Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

Given during the Holy Season of Easter
in the Year of Our Lord 2026.

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✠ **The Most Rev. Arturo Querijero Ferreras, D.D., ECSGS**

First Presiding Bishop,

The Diocese of the Ecumenical Catholic Servants of the Good Shepherd.

Pacific Southwestern Region of California, USA