



“To you in fact I transmitted, first of all, what I also received, that is:

*that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and was buried and rose on the third day according to the Scriptures ...*

Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!” (1Cor 15:3-4,57)

Dear confreres, Happy Easter, Christ is Risen, Alleluia

During my visit to the Province of Congo, one of the beautiful expressions I heard in liturgical celebrations was this:

**Bandeko (brothers), Bobóto (peace), Esengo (joy), Bolingo (love) Alleluia!**

Yes, the faithful who participated in the liturgies in different places of the Church of the Congo, which was born and grew under the martyrdom and testimony of many bishops, priests, religious and laity, including our confreres killed with other martyrs in 1964, showed me that in their heart, in their smile and in their celebrations there is peace, joy and love.

Yes, in our individual and community life and in society, the gifts of peace, joy, love, reconciliation, justice, patience, consolation, hope, fortitude in struggle and beauty of life, are all signs that **Jesus Christ is Risen.**

Yes, even in our intercultural and inter-generational communities, **Jesus Christ is Risen and is Present** if there is the witness of the consecrated life to God, if there is fraternity, joy, mutual trust, work and commitment together for the mission among the poor and the suffering, the journey made together with the people of God to build the Kingdom of God where justice, peace and reconciliation reigns and where Nature is respected.

Yes, **Jesus Christ is Risen and is Present** when we go on in life even though our vulnerabilities, fragility and conflicts weigh heavily on our individual and community life, on our societies and on the world. He, the Risen Lord, who has conquered sin and death, is present and is our strength.

“Never for an instant from its formation this adorable Heart, made divine by the hypostatic union of the Word with the human nature in Jesus Christ our Saviour, always free from sin and rich in every grace, did not beat with the purest and most merciful love for men. From the sacred manger in Bethlehem he hastens to proclaim peace to the world for the first time: as a little boy in Egypt, alone in Nazareth, a preacher of the good news in Palestine, he shares his lot with the poor, invites little ones to come to him, comforts the mournful, heals the sick and raises the dead to life; he calls the burdened and forgives the repentant; dying on the Cross he prays with great docility for his own torturers; risen in glory he sends out the Apostles to preach salvation to the whole world” (Writings 3323).

Best wishes for the celebrations of Holy Easter, Christ is risen and lives in us.

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