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AN EASTER PRAYER FOR OUR FAMILIES

Loving God,
On this joyful Easter season,
we give thanks for the gift of new life
revealed through the Resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ.
May the light of Easter hope
shine brightly in our homes and hearts,
renewing our faith, strengthening our families,
and reminding us that love always triumphs over darkness.
Bless our children as they grow in wisdom, compassion, and faith.
Guide parents, guardians, educators, and school communities
as we journey together in nurturing hearts grounded in kindness,
service, and respect for all.
Help us to be witnesses of the Resurrection
through our words and actions—
bringing peace where there is conflict,
hope where there is uncertainty,
and love wherever there is need.
We ask this through Christ our Risen Lord.
Amen.

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2026 Easter message from the Liaison

Bishop

✠ Yvan Mathieu, SM

Dear members of the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE),
In a few days, during the night of April 4th, the Church will celebrate "The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night." This "greatest and most noble of all solemnities" "must take place during the night, so that it begins after nightfall and ends before daybreak on the Sunday."
(Roman Missal, p. 343)

It is not by accident that this great celebration is conducted in darkness. The idea is to allow the light of the Resurrection of Christ to illuminate the darkness of our world. We first want to proclaim the greatness of our God and Father:

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

O LORD my God, you are very great.

You are clothed with honor and majesty,
wrapped in light as with a garment. (Psalm 104:1-2a)

With Christ, we are also invited to pass from darkness to light, from death to life. The Vigil opens with the blessing of the new fire of Easter and lighting of the Easter Candle. While he lights the paschal candle, the priest presiding says: "May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds." (Roman Missal, p. 346) During the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet), we sing: "Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her, ablaze with light from her eternal King, let all corners of the earth be glad, knowing an end to gloom and darkness. Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice, arrayed with the lightning of his glory..." (Roman Missal, p. 353)

In this year 2026, we may have the impression that the world's gloom and darkness are particularly thick. We live in a world scarred by wars, conflicts and violence. Even our families, our schools, our working places cannot always escape the darkness that surrounds us. For us Catholic believers, it is crucial that we be exposed once again to the light of the Resurrection of Christ.

At baptism, each one of us has been entrusted with the light of Christ, with the light of Easter: "Receive the light of Christ. Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. These children of yours have been enlightened by Christ. They are to walk always as children of the light. May they keep the flame of faith alive in their hearts." (Ritual of Baptism)

As parents who presented your children to baptism, you accepted a great responsibility: "On your part, you must make it your constant care to bring them [your children] up in the practice of the faith. See that the divine life which God gives them is kept safe from the poison of sin, to always grow stronger in their hearts." (Ritual of Baptism)

As members of the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education, we must find courage in the gloom and darkness of this world. This courage comes from a living relationship with Christ, the Light of the world. As we prepare to celebrate the Resurrection with our families and our parish communities, let us allow the Holy Spirit to rekindle the light we received at baptism, the light that we committed ourselves to relay to our children. Through our commitment and dedication, may we become more and more bearers of Christ's light, especially for our children and our catholic schools.

As we will celebrate the victory of God's light over our world's darkness, I convey to you the words the angel addressed to the women who discovered the empty tomb. "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." (Matt. 28:5-7) May we guide our children and family to Galilee so that all of us may contemplate the risen Lord.

A happy and holy Easter.

✠ Yvan Mathieu, SM

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An Easter Invitation

Easter is the holiest and most joyful season of our faith—a time when we celebrate the Resurrection, renewal, and the boundless hope Christ offers the world. It is also a beautiful moment to reflect on how we, as a community of school, family, and Church, can gently and lovingly welcome families back into the fold.

In many parishes, families may feel distant for a variety of reasons: busy schedules, uncertainty about returning after time away, or simply feeling disconnected from the routines and relationships that once anchored them. Easter gives us an opportunity to extend an invitation rooted not in guilt or expectation, but in love, mercy, and belonging.

Families often need reassurance that the Church is a place where they are known, valued, and missed. A simple smile at the door, a friendly greeting from a familiar face, or a message from parish leadership can make a powerful difference.

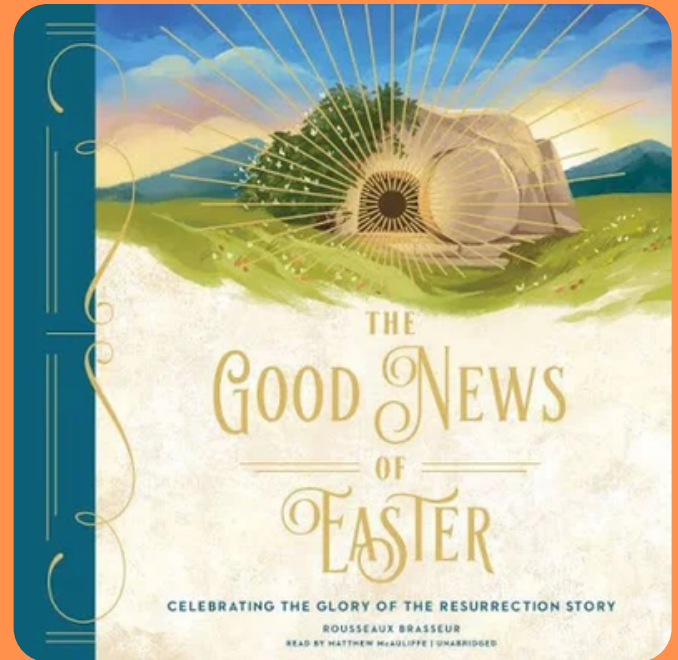


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Good News of Easter

Good News of Easter is a beautifully illustrated picture book that helps young children understand the meaning and joy of Jesus' Resurrection. Written for ages 4–8, it introduces the Easter story in a simple, uplifting way, highlighting God's love, the hope of new life, and the celebration of Jesus rising from the dead. The book invites families to reflect on the true message of Easter through accessible language and warm, engaging artwork

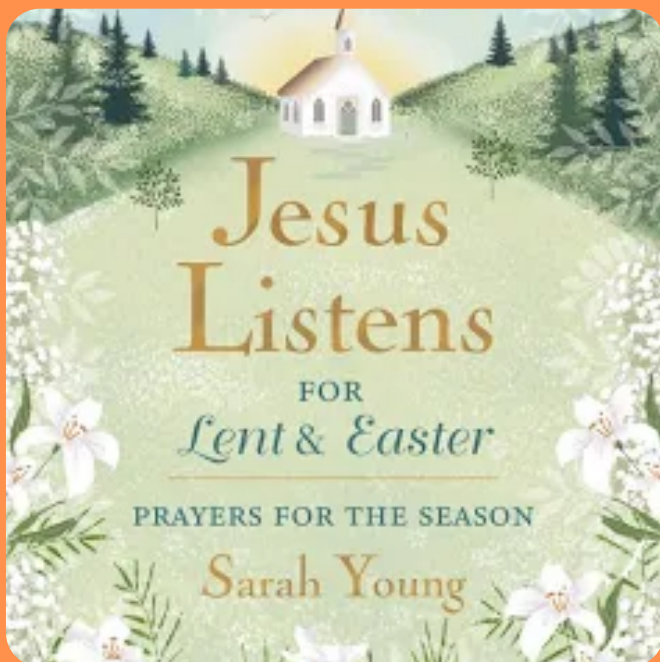


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Jesus Listens

Jesus Listens — For Lent and Easter guides readers through the prayerful journey of Lent into the joy of Easter. This special edition offers daily Scripture - rooted prayers written in a “prayer-to-Jesus” style. Each entry is designed to help individuals or families slow down, reflect, and grow closer to Christ during the most sacred season of the Christian year.



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