

May I, at the outset, convey my Easter wishes to all the TABOR Readers. We are in the joyful Easter Season that reminds us of Christ's Triumphant Resurrection inviting all of us to live a renewed Christian life. As we share the joy of Easter with our relatives and friends, we can all be reminded ourselves of the enormous contribution Christianity has made to humanity. Easter also reminds us to follow our conscience and ask not what we are entitled to, but what we can do for others. It teaches us about charity, compassion, responsibility and forgiveness. No matter what religion we follow, it promotes these values to us.

The spirit of Easter is all about hope, love and joyful living. May all of us experience the saving hope, love and compassion of the Risen Lord in our everyday life.

This month is again a busy month for the students and teachers as they are in the midst of their annual examinations. I wish them every success in their endeavours.

After completing the high school and college studies, many of our young boys and girls will be planning for their future careers. Well, while planning for other fields of specialization, they should also think of dedicating their lives to God by opting to become priests and religious. No doubt, it calls for total dedication and sacrifice, but God's grace would certainly help us to serve the humanity with joy and Christian commitment.

God is calling every single one of us to work for the Gospel. For a small number it may be as a priest or religious – and that call can come at any time in one's life. But there are hundreds of other ways of serving the Church and helping to build up the Christian community. Where is God calling me to make my own unique contribution based on the particular talents God has given me? If every single one of us were to answer that question sincerely and to act upon it, I am confident that our Church would have all the leadership it needs. Let us pray for more priestly and religious vocations to the Church in general and our Archdiocese in particular. The parish priests and the heads of the institutions are requested to promote vocations. This year, the Archdiocese will be getting 7 new priests and 5 deacons, and let us pray for their successful ministry in our Archdiocese.

In this month, we will also be celebrating the *Feast of Divine Mercy*. It is the promise of the total forgiveness of all sins and punishment for any soul that would go to Confession and then receive Jesus in Holy Communion on that very special Feast of Divine Mercy! ‘Why would Jesus offer us something so great at this time’ is our main question. Jesus told St. Faustina that she was to prepare the world for His Second Coming and that He would be pouring out His Mercy in very great abundance before He comes again as the Just Judge and as the very last hope of salvation. Let us not miss out this incredible gift of God’s mercy that is available in every Catholic Church, especially in this year of mercy.

Reflection: A great Japanese warrior named Nobunaga decided to attack the enemy although he had only one-tenth the number of men the opposition commanded. He knew that he would win, but his soldiers were in doubt. On the way he stopped at a Shinto shrine and told his men: “After I visit the shrine I will toss a coin. If heads comes, we will win; if tails, we will lose. Destiny holds us in her hand.”

Nobunaga entered the shrine and offered a silent prayer. He came forth and tossed a coin. Heads appeared. His soldiers were so eager to fight that they won their battle easily.

“No one can change the hand of destiny,” his attendant told him after the battle. “Indeed not,” said Nobunaga, showing a coin which had been doubled, with heads facing either way.

If we compare our life to a coin, it has two faces of “Hope” on either side. To remind us that we are Christians and that we live always by hope and trust. The word "hope" in ordinary English vocabulary is generally distinguished from certainty. We would say, "I don't know what's going to happen, but I *hope* it happens." When we read the word "hope" in the Bible, hope is not wishful thinking. It's not "I don't know if it's going to happen, but I *hope* it happens." That's absolutely *not* what is meant by Christian hope. We read in 1 Peter 1:13: "Set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ". Christian hope is when God has promised that something is going to happen and we put our trust in that promise. Christian hope is a confidence that something will come to pass because God has promised it will come to pass. Jesus said He came so His followers “may have life, and that they may have it more

abundantly” (John 10:10). God’s way of living has great benefits for this life and offers “pleasures forevermore” in the next (1 Timothy 4:8; Psalm 16:11). That doesn’t mean that Christian living is easy. The challenges and difficulties of this way of life are designed to help us grow to have Jesus Christ’s mind and the character. We are to learn to think and act like God because He wants us to be His children forever! Jesus taught us how to deal with the challenges of life. He helps us build strong, supportive, loving relationships. His life on earth taught us to grow in knowledge of God’s ways and in acting on that knowledge.

I invoke God’s abundant blessings upon you and your families.

+ Bernard Moras
Archbishop of Bangalore