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April 13, 2022  
Wednesday of Holy Week

**Dear Clergy, Religious, and People of God of the Diocese of Saskatoon:**

*Greetings to you all as we approach another Holy Week and Easter Season!* The effects of the COVID pandemic have brought a whole new reality and set of circumstances for us all. However, the war in Ukraine and the prayer of consecration of all humanity, including Ukraine and Russia – have brought to our minds and hearts the awareness of the urgent need for a peace – a right restoration of relationship – with God, with one another, with all creation, and within ourselves - that only God can give us. In the words of our Saviour: *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled.”* John 14:27

Our Lenten journey in the wilderness with Jesus has featured a renewed sense of vulnerability and brokenness in our world. However, it has also been a time of tremendous blessing and kindness.

We have all recently heard about the meeting of the Indigenous delegation to Pope Francis in Rome. At the end of the meeting the Holy Father gave an apology. While many of us continue to ponder our thoughts and reactions to his words, I am also hearing from many people – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – that the Holy Father’s message was heartfelt and has provided much food for thought and reflection. It is another important step as we continue the long journey of careful and respectful listening to Indigenous peoples that marks the path towards healing and relationship-building.

At the end of his apology address to the delegation, Pope Francis stated: *“The Spirit of the Lord is revealed in humility ...the humiliation of the Church is fruitfulness.”* These words have a significant meaning as we remember the passion and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ and the pathway forward for healing and right relationship. The *peace* that Christ gave His life for requires prayer and ongoing work on our part. In the words we have prayed during the week of the delegation, inspired by the *Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle*, we continue to pray: *“That we who live in this land, Indigenous and non-Indigenous together may experience healing and reconciliation, on a renewed journey for justice and peace for our children.”*

Thank you all so very much for showing what it means to strive to have the same mind and heart as that of Christ Jesus during difficult and extraordinary times. In this upcoming season, I encourage us all to continue to care and pray for each other during these challenging times which also can lead us – with God’s help – to a new right relationship. As Pope Francis recently prayed with all bishops and dioceses throughout the world during the Act of Consecration of all humanity, including Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, may our Blessed Mother Mary show us the way through sorrow and pain to a renewed hope and right relationship. Let us pray again together:

*O Mother - may your sorrowful plea stir our hardened hearts. May the tears you shed for us make this valley parched by our hatred blossom anew...  
May you, our “living fountain of hope”, water the dryness of our hearts.  
In your womb Jesus took flesh; help us to foster the growth of communion.  
You once trod the streets of our world; lead us now on the paths of peace.  
Amen*

Holy Week and the Easter season renew our awareness that nothing can come between us and the great love of God in Jesus Christ. May these extraordinary times, which call from us great faith, hope and love, continue to be a time of strengthening, healing and renewal for us all.

*We adore you O Christ and we praise You, for by Your Holy Cross you redeemed and saved the world! In the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*

Sincerely in Christ,



✠ Bishop Mark Hagemoen