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*"While they went on talking about this,
Jesus himself stood in their midst
and said to them,
'Peace be with you!'"*

Luke 24:36

Easter 2026

Dear companions in the Lord!

Let us put ourselves in the disciples' situation immediately before their encounter with the risen Lord – they are deeply unsettled, talking among themselves about what they have experienced or heard, but perhaps unable to believe what is beyond their comprehension. Where there should be exuberant joy, confusion and perplexity prevail. And then suddenly the risen Lord appears in their midst – the one they have been talking about all along, but they do not recognise Him.

When Jesus appears to the disciples, his appearance initially triggers bewilderment and fear, despite the message of the resurrection they had heard before, the testimony of the disciples who had encountered Him. It is simply too wonderful, beyond all comprehension. They were not prepared for this encounter, and it takes Jesus' patient pedagogy to convince them that it is indeed Him, that He is alive, that He is turning to them. It takes time for the soul to catch up.

If we break down the disciples' encounter with the risen Lord into our everyday lives, are there not often situations in which perplexity spreads, situations of nagging questions or gnawing doubts? Are these situations in which we reach our limits in our personal lives or seek new perspectives, situations in which we as a community, as a part of our so complex world ask questions, seek answers, search for the next steps, reflect about our future, try to develop perspectives? And all this in a mixture of trust, faith and hope, but also quiet fear, uncertainty, perhaps sometimes with hints of doubt, frustration or pessimism. How often are we so caught up in our thoughts and conversations that we can no longer see beyond what is currently preoccupying us?

And it is precisely in this context that the Risen One appears, bears witness to the overcoming of death and promises us peace. Are we able to recognise Him? Or do we too overlook Him, misjudge Him? Can we open ourselves to His loving and patient attempts to reveal Himself, to make us receptive to His peace and to the life that has overcome death once and for all? To open up for the incredible joy of new, everlasting life?

We can and must ask for it and help each other to be sensitive to the actual presence of the risen Lord in our lives, in our midst. We will then experience, that the darkness transforms into the tender and promising light of Easter morning, which fills us with joy, hope and trust. We will experience in every fibre of our being that our faith in the overcoming of death and the peace of the Risen One are not a cheap consolation for the hereafter, but intervene in our real life and strongly determine how we approach our present and our future. It brings transformation and urges us to share our Easter experience with others.

The risen Lord assures us of His peace – each of us personally, as a community, as a part of creation. The risen Lord is and remains with us, we are never alone, never abandoned or lost. We become capable to embrace life with all its joys and promises, with all its uncertainties and questions with positive energy because He lives and He grants us peace!

Let us rejoice with the psalmist: "I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of your wonders. I will rejoice and be glad in you; I will sing and shout for joy to you, O Most High" (Ps 9:2-3).

From the bottom of my heart, I wish you all a blessed and joyful Easter!

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