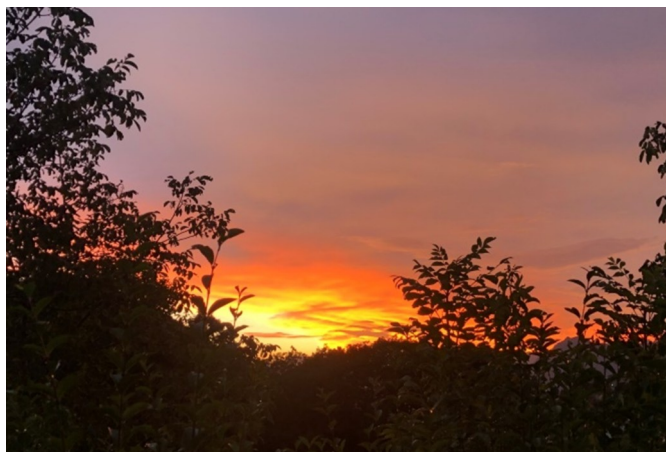


Easter message

*« We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.
And what is more, it is the third day
since all this took place.» (Lk 24, 21)*



On Easter morning, the tomb is empty, the Lord is risen, but no one knows it yet; no one has seen him.

And while the disciples of Emmaus are talking with a stranger on the road, the hopes that the Master had awakened in their hearts on the way resurface, accompanied by confusion and great disappointment. Yet, in the dialogue, something remains open: three days have passed and the women who returned from the tomb say they have seen angels who affirm that the Lord is alive!

This is the image of our lives, between growing expectations and overwhelming disappointments: disappointed by failed projects or by people who have hurt us, sometimes even disappointed by ourselves. But hope does not disappoint and does not deceive.

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, these words of Pope Francis show us a path, a task: **to learn hope**. Hope is much more than the fruit of our calculations and predictions, even optimistic ones. It is much more than waiting for favourable opportunities...

Hope comes from the certainty of knowing that we are loved and forgiven: this makes us feel reborn, gives us new life. Saint Paul reminds us of this in his letter to the Romans: *« And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. » (Rm 5,5)*

Lord, we ask you to teach us hope in all situations of our lives, even the most difficult ones, so that we may feel loved as we are, with our weaknesses and imperfections. Grant us also, in our Faith and Light communities, to learn to grow in love, forgiveness and hope, bringing this message to all those we meet on our way: the Lord is alive, the Lord is risen!

Happy Easter !

Don Marco Bove
International chaplain