



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

## **A blessed Easter Sunday to all of you!**

As we celebrate this special day, we remember not bunnies and chocolate eggs but the love Almighty God has for each of us. On Easter Sunday, we celebrate how God, in a personal way, conquered sin and death, as He rose from the grave.

I love the image of the stone being thrown away from the tomb, because in my own mind, I see the stone as symbolizing all of my sin, brokenness, shame, self-hatred, fear, all of the problems in my life that I cannot overcome on my own. Jesus shows the power He has over all of that darkness, even over my eventual death. Jesus Christ Conquers!

I think about last year when we were not able to have public Masses for much of Lent, all of the fifty days of the Easter Season, and beyond. It has been a very trying year for so many – including myself – but it is an opportunity for all of us to ask how much we trust God. Do we really believe that He can overcome – even COVID?! That means that since COVID came and is still around, He has a plan (in His permissive will – meaning that, while God may not directly will something, He permits it to happen) for how the experience of COVID will help you and me to become more holy, more loving, more the “best-version-of-ourselves”.

So I invite you to think about this past year. What were the struggles in which you found yourself? Maybe you or someone you know got COVID. Maybe someone you love died. Maybe you’ve experienced the loneliness of quarantine and isolation. Maybe you found that trying to work from home and help kids go to school on-line was beyond your capacity!

Whatever the issues, whatever the problems, **Jesus is the answer!** He has overcome all of our problems. He is giving us the opportunity during these troubling times to come to His Heart, to rest in Him, to allow Him to care for us, protect us, and bring us the healing we need. One of my favorite quotes is from the *Diary of St. Faustina* as Jesus speaks to Faustina saying, “**Tell aching mankind to snuggle close to My merciful Heart, and I will fill it with peace**” (*Diary* 1074).

Jesus has conquered sin and death. He is the answer to every problem, every trouble, every fear in our lives. He invites us to His Heart – even to “snuggle” close to His Heart (can you believe the Lord of the universe would actually say “snuggle,” and invite us to do that with Him?! Well, He did invent snuggling, after all). He invites us to trust Him.

This Easter, may we entrust to Jesus all of the troubles and trials, sins and vices of our lives, knowing that He will give us peace if only we snuggle into His Heart.