



***Twenty fourth letter of His Excellency
Bishop Paul-Marwan Tabet
To the Maronite Community of Canada
Easter 2025***

*To all Monsignors, Priests and Brothers, Nuns and Sisters, Deacons,
To all people consecrated and committed to the life of the Church and the Society,
To all Parents, Children, Young Men and Young Women,
To all Parish Communities,*

Beloved Brothers and Sisters,

Extending to you my heartfelt greetings and bringing you the joyful proclamation of the Resurrection, is a joy that is renewed every year: **Christ is Risen!** Our hope is for this joy to reach every heart, for it is in the heart that God wishes to sow this hope: **the salvation of humanity**. Through the Resurrection of the Lord, we are no longer under the dominion of sin! Love has triumphed. Hope has conquered - hope and so has hope, a hope that belongs to every person on this earth.

This year, as we celebrate Easter and walk the **Jubilee Journey** to which His Holiness Pope Francis has invited us, we set out toward the tomb of Jesus with Peter and John to become **“Pilgrims of Hope.”** But what does this mean?

To be a pilgrim of hope is to carry within us the **Christian hope**, which is a life-giving force shaping our faith and enabling us to live in the light of God's promises. It is the certainty that God will always fulfill His promises to us - even in the most difficult moments - no matter the storms or challenges of life. This Christian hope is rooted in the very person of Christ, who **“is our hope”** (1 Tim 1:1), He who gave His life for us and opened the gates of eternal life. Those who place their hope in God - in everything He says and commands, even when difficult to comprehend - remain steadfast, just like the martyrs who preferred death to denying Christ.

Saint Paul expressed the dynamics of this hope most profoundly when he wrote: “...look forward exultantly to God's glory. Not only that; let us exult, too, in our hardships, understanding that hardship develops perseverance, and perseverance develops a tested character, something that gives us hope, and a hope which will not let us down, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us” (Rom 5:2–5). Let us not forget that hope is, in our lives, one of the fruits of the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:13). It is the power that gives us patience amid suffering, and joy amid pain. In Christ, we possess a hope that does not disappoint, regardless of circumstances, because it is grounded in unwavering trust in God's enduring love.

Yet the question that confronts us today remains: *Do we see in Christ the source of our strength and our hope?*

In his apostolic letters, especially in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (1993), Saint John Paul II reminds us that “**Christ is our hope**”. These words express a profound spiritual truth that illuminates our Christian path—within the family, in society, and even amid suffering—as a path that leads to eternal life. Therefore, we are called to be a light of hope to those around us, through the testimony or lived experiences of our daily lives:

• Hope in Daily Life

Christian hope is a **daily endeavor**, which we live out:

- **Through prayer and meditation on God’s promises:** We can begin each morning by recalling God’s unfailing promises, asking Him for perseverance in hope no matter the challenges, journeying through this world as if “having nothing yet owning everything” (2 Cor 6:10).
- **By performing acts of charity:** Through concrete expressions of love and kindness toward others, especially those less fortunate than us. These are practical interpretations of Christian hope (Mat 25).
- **Through repentance and the Sacrament of Reconciliation:** By returning to God in repentance, we renew our hope in His never-ending mercy and love. The practice of this sacrament deepens and continuously renews this hope within us.

• Hope Amid Suffering

Christian hope does **not** mean avoiding pain or suffering; rather, it grants us the strength to endure trials. As Saint John Paul II wrote: "In times of pain, hope gives us the strength to endure and helps us to see suffering as part of the journey toward eternal life." In our daily lives, we may face health challenges, economic hardships, or psychological struggles, but through hope, we are able to see every suffering as an opportunity to unite ourselves to Christ, who suffered for us. Ultimately, there is salvation—a passage from pain to eternal glory.

• Hope in Society

Christian hope is not limited to the individual—it is a collective force that builds confidence within society. When we live as a faithful community, our hope grows stronger. We need each other’s support along life’s journey. As the author of the letter to the Hebrews affirms: “Let us keep firm in the hope we profess, because the one who made the promise is trustworthy.” (Heb 10:23). Our life as a Church is also a testimony of hope: the unity of our community invites others to find the same hope in Christ. Thus, we strive to be active witnesses of hope in a world filled with doubt and anxiety.

• Hope as a Path to Eternal Life

Through hope, we live in anticipation of eternal life, which God has prepared for us. This hope expresses our longing for the second coming of Christ, when the Father will be “all in all” (1 Col 15:28). This vision brings us inner peace, as it focuses on eternity rather than the fleeting ephemeral present.

Dear beloved,

In the midst of the challenges and hardships facing our world today, I pray that you may keep your gaze fixed on the **Risen Christ**, with the firm conviction that His love is at work in you and through you. Let us work together for a better world, where faith triumphs over the danger of losing hope. “Let anyone who believes in me come and drink! As Scripture says, "From his heart shall flow streams of living water" (John 7:38). Through His Resurrection, Jesus Christ proclaimed that death is not the end, that suffering does not have the final word, and that the hope of eternal life is what gives meaning to our existence and purpose to our journey. With every new dawn, let us lift our eyes to heaven, toward our eternal homeland, and proclaim with confidence: “**My hope is in the Lord; I shall not fear, for He is faithful and true forever.**”

Christ is Risen...! He is truly Risen!

+Paul-Marwan Tabet
Maronite Bishop of Canada