

With Love & Gratitude

Easter 2026 Message – Fr. Laszlo Nagy

Christ is risen! Alleluia! He is truly risen! Alleluia!

This proclamation, which echoes through the centuries and fills our churches with joy, is not simply a memory of something that happened long ago. It is a living truth - a truth that has shaped our parish, sustained our faith, and guided us over these past eighteen years together. And now, as I prepare to take up a new pastoral assignment, I write to you with a heart full of gratitude, hope, and deep affection.

Easter is always a moment of new beginnings. It is a moment when God reminds us that no ending is ever final, that no cross is without purpose, and that every Good Friday gives way to the light of Easter morning. This truth speaks powerfully to me now, as I look back on these years at Holy Family Parish and forward to the next chapter of my priestly ministry.

Eighteen years. It is difficult to put into words what these years have meant to me. When I first arrived, I came as your pastor - but also as a pilgrim, learning, growing, and discovering with you what it means to be the Church in this place and at this time. Together, we have walked through moments of great joy and moments of deep sorrow. We have celebrated baptisms, weddings, confirmations, and countless Eucharists. We have stood together at hospital bedsides, gravesides, and in moments of uncertainty and trial. Through it all, Christ has been present - faithful, constant, and alive among us.

I thank God for each of you. I thank God for your faith, your generosity, your patience, and your love for the Church. I thank God for the countless volunteers who have given their time and talent, often quietly and without recognition. I thank God for those who have supported the parish in its mission, especially through the challenges and sacrifices of recent years. And I thank God for those who have journeyed with me personally - your encouragement, your prayers, your friendship have been a great gift to me.

One of the greatest blessings of these years has been the growth of a shared vision - a vision that has shaped who we are as a parish: ***“Holy Family is where we encounter, follow, and share Jesus Christ.”*** This is not just a statement. It is a way of life. It is a call. And it is my deepest hope that this vision will continue to guide you long after I have moved on. *To encounter Jesus Christ* - this is where everything begins. Faith is not first about rules or obligations; it is about a living relationship. Over the years, we have worked together to create opportunities for people to encounter Christ—in the sacraments, in prayer, in Scripture, and in community. I have seen lives changed. I have seen hearts awakened. I have seen people who once felt distant from God rediscover His presence and His love.

But an encounter is only the beginning. We are also called to follow Jesus Christ. This means allowing Him to shape our lives - to influence our choices, our priorities, our relationships. It means trusting Him even when the path is difficult, even when we do not fully understand. Following Christ is not always easy, but it is always meaningful. It leads us to a life that is deeper, richer, and more filled with purpose than we could ever create on our own. And then, we are called to share Jesus Christ. Faith is never meant to be kept to ourselves. It is a gift that grows when it is given away. Over these years, I have been deeply encouraged to see how many of you have embraced this call - inviting others, witnessing through your lives, reaching out to those in need, and helping to build a community that reflects the love of Christ.

This vision is beautifully expressed in our parish mission: ***“Love God, love others, and make disciples.”*** This mission is simple - but it is also demanding. *To love God* means to put Him first. It means to seek Him in prayer, to worship Him faithfully, and to trust in His providence. It means recognizing that everything we have is a gift, and responding with gratitude. *To love others* means to see each person as God sees them - with dignity, compassion, and mercy. It means forgiving, serving, and walking with one another, especially in times of need.

It means building a parish where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and loved. *And to make disciples* - this is the heart of the Gospel. Jesus did not simply ask us to believe; He asked us to go out and bring others to Him. This requires courage. It requires intentionality. It requires us to move beyond a “maintenance” mindset and embrace a “mission” mindset - to see ourselves not just as members of a parish, but as missionaries sent into the world.

As I leave Holy Family Parish, I do so with a deep conviction: the work that God has begun here will continue. The seeds that have been planted will bear fruit. The vision and mission we have embraced together will remain alive - if you continue to live them. The future of this parish does not depend on one priest. It depends on all of you—on your faith, your commitment, and your willingness to say “yes” to what God is asking of you.

So, I encourage you: Continue to seek encounters with Christ. Do not settle for a superficial faith. Go deeper. Spend time in prayer. Receive the sacraments frequently. Open your heart to the transforming power of God’s grace. Continue to follow Christ with trust and courage. Even when it is challenging, even when it requires sacrifice, remember that He is always leading you toward life. Continue to share Christ with others. Invite, welcome, accompany. Be a light in the lives of those around you. Your witness matters more than you realize. Continue to love God, love others, and make disciples—not as a slogan, but as a way of life.

Easter reminds us that God is always doing something new. Just as the disciples could not yet see what the Resurrection would mean for them, we too may not fully understand what lies ahead. But we can trust. We can trust that the same Lord who has been with us in the past will be with us in the future.

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For me, this transition is both joyful and bittersweet. It is not easy to say goodbye to a community that has become so much a part of my life. But I go with peace, knowing that God is calling me forward, just as He is calling each of you. Please know that I carry you with me - in my heart and in my prayers. The bond we share in Christ does not end with a change of assignment. It remains, because it is rooted in Him.

As we celebrate Easter, let us renew our faith in the Risen Lord. Let us allow His victory over sin and death to renew our hearts, our families, and our parish. Let us move forward with hope, with confidence, and with a deep commitment to the Gospel. Christ is alive. He is among us. And He is calling us - each and every one of us - to a new life.

May the Risen Lord bless you and keep you. May He fill your hearts with His peace and His joy. And may He guide Holy Family Parish to continue to be a place where people encounter, follow, and share Jesus Christ.

With gratitude and love,

Fr. László