

The HOPE that Christ calls each of us toward... is the gift of our salvation. However, there are no shortcuts to our faith, we cannot simply stand before the empty tomb, witness the resurrection and be saved.

Christ calls us to a higher purpose.

We must journey with him through the way of the cross, we must experience those hardships in life, perhaps days, weeks, and even years of Good Fridays to finally reach this ultimate hope through which Christ calls his faithful forward.

We need to experience our inner conversion. From being like Saul, who thought that he knew everything and did everything right according to his understanding – to the point that he persecuted Christians, we have to strive to become like Paul, with the new understanding which comes from Christ – despite our many weaknesses.

We must step out on the precipice, we must trust in our journey of faith, and rest assured in the promise of salvation.

Let us look around and see all those sisters and brothers, who are in need, who, often silently, are searching for friendship, for understanding, for acceptance, for kind words or advice.

We are experiencing such extreme trials right now. The Land of our ancestors is unjustly under attack. There are destructions everywhere. Let us help in any way we can. With our prayers and fasting, with our donations and support.

There are many who act as Thomas, who doubt in the news what they hear, trying to explain away some sort of justification for Russian aggression. Let us help them cast away their doubts and inaccuracies, by realizing the suffering that has been inflicted on the people of Ukraine, through no fault of their own.

The hope to which the Lord calls is the same for all of those suffering in Ukraine, for the millions of children who have been displaced - forced to flee the only home they have known and loved, for all of the fathers who must separate from their families as they bravely choose to fight and serve their country, for all of the mothers who must remain strong in the sight of their children.

May the Lord be always with all those who suffer. May the Mother of God protect them. May all the saints take part in their fight.

Let us pray that this war in Ukraine ends by Easter, because we have had many weeks of Good Friday.

Christ calls us to a greater hope, a greater promise, that beyond all this turmoil and pain, we move beyond Good Friday to the hope of Easter morning, the hope in the empty tomb, Christ's promise that if we believe in Him – we shall inherit eternal life.

This is our ultimate hope as faithful Christians... and this is why we are gathered here today, to be reminded of this HOPE that we all share.

LUC stands for Let Us Care. Let us care for each other. Let us care for the poor and marginalized. Let us care for the sick and suffering. Let us care for the young and the old. Let us care for our country in which we live. Let us care for Ukraine torn by an unjust and sacrilegous war.

Thank you all for being here with us today. Let us thank our bishops for agreeing to take part, to educate us, to share their wisdom. Let us listen to them today, and let us come together as a prayerful community of faith.

Thank you, Sophia, our LUC President, for organizing this great event. Дуже а Дуже Дякуємо! God bless you and your family.

At this point I would ask his grace, metropolitan Borys to invoke the Lord's blessing upon us and let us be on our way.

Просимо, Преосвященіший Владико!