



April 15, 2025

Dear Friends,

I hope this note finds you well, with warmer and sunnier spring days on the horizon.

Each year, the onset of this season of new life brings to mind the convergence of holy days in many of our faith traditions. Just a few weeks ago, at the very end of March, Muslims around the world, including here at Scranton, completed their observance of Ramadan. As you read these words, the Jewish community is in the midst of their great, annual commemoration of Passover. And this year, providentially, the dates of Easter in the West and East are one.

At this particular time, one of great division in our country and our world, it is right and just that the coincidence of the calendar finds the same date for Easter among Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants. After all, it was Jesus Himself who prayed on the night before He died:

“I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me. Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world” (John 17: 20-24).

In these beautiful words where Jesus prays that all his followers “may be one,” so my prayer in these holiest of days is that *we may be one*. Recognizing that there is much that divides us, the Christian faith upon which this university is founded reminds us that what brings us together, what unites us, is ever greater than anything that can divide us, such as the political rancor in our own country, or the destruction in war-torn lands throughout the world.

But Jesus says something else in this passage: “Father, they are your gift to me.” These same followers who would betray, deny, and flee from Jesus only hours after these words are uttered are, in fact, a gift to Jesus. In this time when Christians celebrate Jesus’ Resurrection from the dead and our hope in eternal life, other religious traditions commemorate their own liberation and cling to new beginnings.

My own wish for you during these wonderful days is that you have the opportunity to reflect on all of God's blessings in your life, and where needed, make room for new life to prosper.

I wish you every grace and blessing during these most holy days. I hope you find some time to rest as well. Thank you for all you continue to do for our great mission and beloved University.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph G. Marina, S.J.
President