



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

**MESSAGE TO THE NATION BY
DR THE HONOURABLE KEITH ROWLEY, MP
PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
ON THE OCCASION OF
EASTER 2016**

Was not Jesus an extremist for love: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

*An excerpt from "Letter from Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King Jr- August
1963*

Today, Easter Sunday, many of us will enjoy the company of family and friends at home or at the beach; while others will pray and praise together at our churches and other places of worship. On behalf of the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago, I extend the blessings of Easter to our Christian Community.

Always a period for deep contemplation, at Easter the Christian Community recognizes and celebrates the tremendous promise made by God to give his only Son to the World. In the Christian teachings, one momentous, selfless act spiritually liberated a people; giving some the courage to move beyond the familiarity of their homes and villages to spread a message of hope and love to all who chose to listen.

During the Lenten period and Easter, Christians are called to examine their daily actions to determine if they are living the life that Jesus Christ sacrificed himself for them to enjoy.

In his *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, Martin Luther King Jr suggested that "Jesus Christ was an extremist for love". We may also consider that Jesus was an extremist for truth and goodness and therefore rose above the jealousies, bitterness, manipulations and politics playing out around him.

Are we – those observing the Easter traditions and all of us as citizens of Trinidad and Tobago prepared to make the sacrifices that will make us proud of our country? Will we commit to conforming to the Rule of Law? Will we agree to work together, in the spirit of co-operation and conciliation, rising above individualism and partisan interests?

We want to positively guide our young people. We want to provide for ourselves and our family. We want safe communities. We want to root out crime and criminality. We want an economically strong Trinidad and Tobago. We can achieve it all only if we work together with our goal being the greater good for our Nation.

The celebration of Easter, like our other religious observances, invites us to become our best selves. Easter promises renewal; offers us an opportunity to re-define priorities and commands us to honour a mission to make life better for those around us.

Let us determine to put country before self, taking example from the Easter reflections, as we join together to wish the Christian Community a safe, happy and holy Easter.