



The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland

The Rt Revd Dr Richard Treloar
Bishop of Gippsland

Ad Clerum

26 April 2019
Easter Friday

Dear colleagues,

Easter tide greetings.

The bombings in Sri Lanka on Easter Day have made for a sombre Octave of the great Feast of the Resurrection.

What might have been a week of joyful celebration for Western Christians (today being Good Friday for our Orthodox brothers and sisters) has become a time of grief and dismay at further atrocities.

And so we join once more with people of goodwill the world over in denouncing all forms of trafficking fear, and in praying for victims, their families, and the communities most directly impacted.

In a chilling and escalated reprise of (and, it would seem, reprisal for) the Christchurch shootings, sacred spaces which stand for peace and refuge became sites of unimaginable terror and cruelty.

Innocent people practising their faith have again been de-humanised and objectified: instrumentalised as a means to ideological ends.

Christ's risen body still bears the marks of such brutality inflicted on our common flesh, whether in churches, hotels, or mosques.

Having observed ANZAC Day in the same week, especially mindful this year of the pain of our Trans-Tasman neighbours, we are all too aware of the propensity for violence in the human heart.

Milan Kundera has described the struggle of humanity against tyranny as 'the struggle of memory against forgetting'. As the third verse of the Frederik Kaan hymn so apposite for ANZAC Day (*Together in Song* 680, which goes well to the tune of *Eventide*, 'Abide with me') puts it:

Give us deep faith to comfort those who mourn, high hope to share with all the newly born,
strong love in our pursuit of human worth: 'lest we forget' the future of this earth.

If our worship during Holy Week has prepared us in any way to respond theologically, spiritually, and pastorally to these events, it may be in the experience – the *anamnesis*, the not forgetting or re-remembering – of that Love which absorbs anger, which constructs something redemptive from the need for sacrifice (ours, not God's) and which transforms the predictable cycle of revenge into the far riskier possibility of reconciliation, through the unlikely gift, the costly grace, of forgiveness.

May the peaceable kingdom ushered in by the dying and living of Jesus be a sign of hope to a world so desperately in need of a new polity, a restored vision of human community.

A public, ecumenical and interfaith vigil will be held at the Clock Tower in Sale at 12noon on Saturday 4 May. For those unable to attend, please consider gathering in solidarity at that time – or another appropriate time – in your own churches or civic spaces, or simply pausing to reflect and pray.

+ R. Treloar

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