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## **Easter Message 2023**

### **WALKING TOGETHER WITH OUR FIRST AUSTRALIANS**

Aboriginal leader, Noel Pearson, last year described his people as "much unloved." In a distressing observation, he stated that although Australians "hold and express strong views on us...few have met us and a small minority count us as friends."

At this Easter time, we can see ongoing suffering continues in the everyday lives of our beloved First Australians: the high death rates in custody, imprisonment, the persistence of totally unacceptable socio-economic and health statistics, suicides, scattered opinions regarding a Constitutional "Voice to Parliament", racist attitudes in sport, and so on.

The Crucified Christ also has an "Aboriginal face".

Despised and rejected like Jesus, the Good Friday of their suffering continues seemingly unabated.

With all wounded humanity, but especially our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we unite our sufferings with the sufferings of Jesus and receive redemption in the mercy of God.

Easter gives us hope that the Light has destroyed the darkness of alienation and brought us peace in "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." We WALK TOGETHER embracing the Resurrected Victory of Jesus. We carry each other, especially the battlers, closely on our final journey to the fullness of Resurrected glory.

Let us WALK TOGETHER with our First Australians. Practically, this means seeking them out in true friendship in our local communities. Also, trying our best to understand life from their perspective. Practical help will follow. Over these coming months, a Constitutional "Voice to Parliament" will need ears that truly listen.

Then Australia will truly become the Australia God wants us to be – a Resurrected Missionary People washed clean in "the Blood of the Lamb" that lives forever in Easter hope and joy.

Happy Easter to all, Alleluia!

**Archbishop Christopher Prowse**  
*Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn*  
*Apostolic Administrator, Military Ordinariate of Australia*

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**The Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn**

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