

## EASTER MESSAGE 2020

### CORONA (CROWN) OF THORNS

Just a few months ago, none of us had heard of CORONAVIRUS. Now it is our uninvited Easter guest.

It seems the whole world has become sick due to its global presence. We cannot get away from it. It has turned our world upside down. We are anxious and fearful. Even in supermarkets we appear to be suspicious of each other. We are trying our best in our home isolation. The experience so far is one of mixed blessings. New routines are not easy to navigate on our own. Now whole families and others are to negotiate a new way of daily life for the next few months. “Corona” is a Latin word meaning “crown”. This pandemic has become a crown of thorns for us all.

In the hours before his death, Jesus too knew of a crown of thorns. It became one of his terrible sufferings before his death on the Cross of Calvary. Jesus suffers with us in our sufferings. This is the meaning of the key word *compassion*.

The Easter message is clear: by suffering with the suffering Jesus we enter by Grace into the hope of Resurrection in Him.

Doing this is not something of mere human initiative. We surrender to the Grace invitation of Jesus. The Risen Lord awaits our YES coming from our deepest selves. We do this as Church through, with and in Jesus. Mary and all the saints participate in this saving encounter. We are never alone.

This Easter will be celebrated in unprecedented circumstances. All our Churches are closed. Many, but not all, can participate via online platforms. It will be so new to us. Yet, this pandemic will eventually be contained. Hope insists on this.

We want, however, from the quasi-Monastic anchorage of our homes, to encounter Jesus more than ever. Our lives are in flux. Only Jesus remains forever. Alleluia! Our new found Easter faith insists that it be expressed in practical charity. We do all we can to help those struggling. We thank the medical professionals, cleaners and volunteers, emergency forces, priests and religious, lay faithful and all who give us particular leadership in our time of real need of human closeness and the caress of the Lord who rises in our midst.

Happy Easter and every blessing to you all!

Archbishop Christopher Prowse  
Canberra Goulburn Archdiocese  
Apostolic Administrator of Wagga Wagga Diocese.