



## EASTER 2023

*Do not be afraid* the angel tells the women who have come to the empty tomb. *I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here. He has risen as he said he would!*

*Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him."*

Life is calling them, calling us away from dead things. Love is calling them and us out of the tomb of our fears and despair. Will we go and see where he is coming to meet us?

Each Easter, we repeat the familiar rites. We come together and take simple things - fire and light - water and oil - bread and wine. This is beautifully echoed in the artwork by Poppy Wishart which I selected from our Easter Art Exhibition. We tell the great story again. We sing, we pray, we move together. We stand at the doorway of a mystery where past and present and future come together.

This mystery is our relationship with God. We don't understand it fully now, but we can touch it and we can enter it.

This mystery is Jesus Christ, son of God and son of Mary. Two thousand years ago, his friends saw him die and then they met him after he rose from the dead, the same man but transformed. Their story has been handed on to us. It can become our story too, because Jesus is alive and we can meet him too, wherever Galilee may be for you or me.

The story has been handed on, not in words alone, but in the community of the Church and her sacraments. In Baptism we celebrate not just an outward ceremony: we receive faith and eternal life from God. For those who are baptized, the new creation has already begun.

Each Christian's story of receiving forgiveness and a new beginning is their own. And, as each person's story opens out to the life of God's Kingdom, we discover, in the communion of saints, in the life of the Church, that it is one great story and it is ours.

*+Michael McKenna*  
**Bishop of Bathurst**