

DIOCESE IN EUROPE

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

The Bishop in Europe:
The Right Reverend Dr. Robert Innes



Dear Friends,

Message for Easter 2024

As the season of Lent draws to a close we move into Passiontide and the annual remembrance of the suffering, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The resurrection is never presented as a kind of happy addendum to the earthly life of Christ, as if everything has now been put to rights. The resurrection is the crucified Lord, bearing the wounds of the cross in his hands and side, returning to the Father there to intercede for a world that continues to suffer. The world which he made, for which he died, remains fractured and broken, and continues to stand in need of healing, redemption, salvation.

In 2024, we are deeply aware of the world's sorrows. Poverty and hardship abound. The terrible war in Ukraine rages on. Many on our continent are living as exiles in strange lands. And before us unfolds the horrific spectacle of a man-made famine in Gaza.

Christian faith, my faith, is rooted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Jesus takes the worst that sin and the devil can throw at him and overcomes them. And the power of God, known on that first Easter Day, continues to be at work through history, revealed wherever peace surprisingly breaks out, or a child is found alive in the rubble of a bombed-out building or we witness the human kindness of a family taking in refugees. Our own diocese witnesses to the Christian values of justice, peace and reconciliation.

This year our diocese bears some additional stresses as we have said farewell to Bishop David and his chaplain Frances Hiller. I express thanks on all our behalf to our archdeacons and honorary assistant bishops for their willingness to take on new responsibilities during the episcopal vacancy. Through many changes and chances, I praise God that the life and witness of our chaplaincies and diocese remains strong.

In 2024 many in our European continent are anxious; many are suffering; many are separated from those they love. For these, and for us all, we pray for the light, the peace and the hope of the risen Christ to be made known afresh in our minds and our hearts. God bless you richly this Easter.

Robert Gibraltar in Europe

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