

Message from Bishop Robert

6 May 2025



These first weeks of the Easter season have been very much marked by baptism and confirmation. Bishop Rachel and I between us have heard some 70 adults and young people declaring with confidence, from their own mouth and their own hearts, that they are ready to affirm their faith in Jesus Christ.

At these services, a good number of those being confirmed have given their testimony, telling something of the story of what has brought them to this moment. One of the recurrent themes has been of how they have met with Jesus, often in difficult and challenging times. That should not be a surprise. The first disciples in the days after the crucifixion of Jesus were themselves afraid, so afraid that they locked themselves in (John 20). They had been with Jesus through his ministry, heard his teaching, become his friends, but in these last days they had seen him betrayed, tried and executed. No wonder they were afraid. But now there were rumours that Jesus was alive, and it is precisely here, in the midst of their fear, that Jesus comes to them, stands among them (this is no ghost) and says, 'Peace be with you'. As those being confirmed this year have themselves discovered, Jesus comes to us when we are afraid, with a message of peace, the message that love has triumphed over death, a message that drives our fear and send us out to be bearers of peace, Christ's peace, to the people of our communities and of the world, that they too may know peace.

These stories of men, women and children finding faith, coming to Confirmation, and being sent out to be the light of Christ in the world have been so encouraging. In a world where the news is so often full of bad news, of death and decay, these days have been filled with life, with hope and with confidence in the love of God in Jesus that triumphs over death. They are of course good of signs of life for the Church, more significantly they are signs of hope for our world and its people.

Jesus says to each one of us 'Peace be with you!' and in coming to us sends us out to be light, to share that Peace. It is this that makes us Easter people, people of hope, hope not made of easy answers, hope that know the reality of darkness and death and the power of the Resurrection. This is the good news of life in all its fullness that we are called to share.

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