



DIAKONIA Prayer Letter – April 2018

For the first time in more than 70 years*, the Christian season of Lent began (Ash Wednesday) on the day of romance (Valentine's Day) and ended with Easter Day on April 1 (April Fools Day). And the last time Easter Day fell on April Fools Day was in 1956. (*The DIAKONIA Federation was formed in 1947).

April Fools Day reminds us of the best April Fools' prank of all time. Everyone thought Christ was dead and gone, but Christ lives! Even his closest followers found it hard at first to believe this was possible. The authorities thought they had defeated Jesus after crucifying him like a common criminal. They thought that death would triumph - but then the stone was rolled away, the grave was empty, Jesus was alive and the future was wide open.

'The foolishness of the cross' is central to Christian faith, and resurrection is the ultimate 'April Fools Day' joke. God has 'the last laugh' by defeating death.

"Jews ask for signs, and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, which is a scandal to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. But to those who are called - both Jews and Greeks - Christ is God's power and God's wisdom. This is because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength." (1 Cor 22-25).

We are Easter people. We celebrate Jesus' risen life. Resurrection literally means to make something right again. And we are agents of resurrection, partnering with God to bring healing and wholeness, and 'making something right again'.

"When we start to live as resurrection people, we recognise that we participate in resurrection in every moment that we bring life to others, whether through caring for our environment, working to alleviate poverty, serving those in need, learning to understand other cultures and people, or living more simply and peacefully in order to foster justice and equality in our world".**

We pray for all who have forgotten how to see
beyond this temporary life into eternity.
We pray for all whose lives are so consumed by death,
that life seems unreal and out of reach.
We pray for those who mistakenly believe that they can find life
by destroying the lives of others.
We pray for those who feel that their right to life
has been stolen away.
We pray for those who grieve over the life of a loved one,
now ended in this space and time.
And we pray for every human soul,
ourselves included,
that Your Spirit of Life would break into our experience
and change it into something of eternal value. **
And we pray for our diaconal brothers and sisters around the world...
(prayers are offered)
We pray in the name of the risen Christ. Amen.

(**John van de Laar, posted on his website, Sacredise)

Sandy Boyce, President