



It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb (Jn 20:1).

Dear sisters and brothers, I greet you in the name of the Risen Lord! Alleluia!

Our Lenten journey of the past forty days has been marked by our own transformation: prayer, fasting, acts of charity.

This Lent has also been marked by war and natural disaster. The sadness of the invasion of Ukraine has filled us with grief for the destruction, homelessness, fear, turmoil and injury of so many innocent people. The power of evil has cast its shadow of darkness upon so many.

In early March many people across NSW and Qld had to endure the devastating floods – unprecedented, and becoming all too frequent. The magnitude of the loss of homes, dislocation of so many people, those who died and the mountains of debris stark reminders of our powerlessness against the forces of Mother Nature. So many people have carried the burden of the cross – in their sufferings, losses and the injustices they have carried.

I wear this cross given to me by family at the time of my Ordination. It's symbol that the one cross of Jesus has become the source of hope, life and promise. The paradox of the Cross is both its death and promise of salvation:

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You, because by Your Cross You Have Redeemed the World

Today as we reflect on the resurrection of the Lord, we are mindful of the first Easter day. Mary Magdala – the faithful friend of Jesus comes to his tomb. She has not deserted him; she comes in search of him.

We think of the many people who have been “Mary of Magdala” for us: our families, friends, our clergy, pastoral staff and parish friends. We recall those powerful images of those who came in rescue of those in time of war and flood – giving life for friend and stranger – not counting the cost, but giving for the richness of human goodness and love.

These Holy Days of the Triduum have taken us on a journey to remember and to celebrate:

Holy Thursday – in the memory of the Eucharist and service;

Good Friday – the memory of the One who has carries and shares our suffering unto death;

Easter Day – the Promise that he is with us always – accompanying us with his love, hope, joy and promise of resurrection.

Courage, sisters and brothers, we do not walk alone, for Jesus Christ Risen from the Dead is with us!

*Bishop Greg Bennet
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