The Anglican Church of Australia
The Diocese of Ballarat

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An Easter Message
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I'm always grumpy when the electricity fails and the lights go out. I don't mind no TV or not being able to use the electric kettle, but I don't like the darkness. Even when I was little I always found the dark uncomfortably different, even a bit scary.

Easter is all about darkness and light and the tension between them – a tension that is both physical, and about the rollercoaster of emotions that most of us live with as we swing between moments of elation and joy and moments of sadness and loneliness.

The Easter story moves from the excitement of Palm Sunday and Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, to the pain of his betrayal and abandonment, to his humiliating death on the Cross and the mysterious empty tomb and the growing belief that Jesus has risen from the dead. It is no surprise that the gospel writers talk of the darkness covering the land when Jesus died on the Cross, and contrast that with the emerging light of dawn as Jesus' followers slowly come into a bright new day as they come to understand his resurrection from death.

Light and dark, joy and sadness, life and death – these are all familiar patterns of our lives. And the TV news reminds us that many people in our world suffer these extremes even more than we do. In Ukraine, in Yemen, in Myanmar, in the hidden corners of our own city and surrounding country towns, many people live harsh lives where they struggle to cling to the possibility of light. Yet something in us about courage, resilience, the sheer doggedness of the human spirit always reaches for the light. And when we are bowed down with the darkness of our own grief or sorrow or pain, then other people can be light bearers for us. In this bundle of our complicated lives there is always someone who can carry hope and possibility for us. The idea of resurrection is something that we see in our agricultural rhythms of planting, growing and harvesting. It is not really a foreign idea.

Easter is a time for good food and drink, for chocolate, for laughter and for quiet tears, a time for reflection and thankfulness. Christians love Easter because it reminds us that all the messiness of our lives is caught up in the light and love of God. And not just our lives, but the whole of creation, the seeming dark, insoluble crises in our world are all in the heart of God. May you know something of that love and that light and that heart this Easter.

+ Garry Weatherill
Anglican Bishop of Ballarat

https://youtu.be/hGQ8yVBFPTY