



EASTER MESSAGE 2025

DIOCESE OF POLYNESIA

My Dear Brothers and sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia

Across the Diocese, in Fiji, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga and our DoP community in New Zealand, parishes and Easter camps share a sense of quiet anticipation since Maundy Thursday. As night falls on this Holy Saturday, we gather in the darkness, each holding a small flame that soon transforms into a powerful symbol of our hope. The Paschal Candle is lit, representing the Light of Christ, and from that single holy flame, we light candles one by one, person by person, creating a warm and radiant glow around us. This beautiful scene captures the triumph of love and light over darkness, reminding us that even death is not the final chapter.

The Easter Vigil is a celebration of the essence of the Church where we journey from darkness into light, from death into life, through the waters of baptism, and into the joy of the Resurrection. This light leads us into the Easter Day Gospel of John 20:1–18. Here we meet Mary Magdalene, who comes to the tomb while it is still dark. Though she carries the flickering light of her faith, her grief is deep. But what she discovers is unexpected: the stone is rolled away, and Jesus' body is missing. Instead of answers, she hears her name, "Mary."

This encounter is profoundly significant. Jesus chooses to appear to an ordinary person and calls her by name, demonstrating that God is close and personal rather than distant. Amid our struggles during these challenging times, filled with climate change, flooding, social issues, and financial difficulties, God remains near to us.

The light of Easter doesn't erase darkness; it transforms it. When Jesus tells Mary, "Do not hold on to me," He isn't pushing her away but guiding her toward a new kind of connection. Christ is now with us in new ways, through the Spirit, in His words, during Communion, and in our community. We're called to embrace what is new that is, a renewed creation, a redeemed humanity, and a Church that shares the message of Easter with the world.

Dear friends, Easter is not just a day; it serves as a way of life. To be an Easter people is to live each day in the light of the resurrection. It is to carry the hope of Christ into the darkness and our wounded community and world. It is to announce, through our word and deed, that love and light have triumphed.

As your Archbishop, I pray that the light of the Risen Christ brings renewal to you this Easter. May our churches shine with faith, our homes glow with joy, and our hearts burn with love and rekindling our hope. May the Risen Christ breathe peace into our hearts, and may His Spirit empower us to be witnesses of His resurrection, wherever He sends us. Let's take this Easter fire into the world, with confidence that darkness cannot overcome it. Let us joyfully echo Mary Magdalene and continue to bear witness to Christ's resurrection, proclaiming, "I have seen the Lord!" (John 20:18)

Wishing you all a blessed and joyful Easter!!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Archbishop Sione Silongo Uluilakepa

Bishop of Polynesia

