



My dear fathers, sisters, brothers and children in the Lord,

CHRIST IS RISEN!

I greet you with the Love of our Risen Lord, praying that these blessed days have brought with them joy and good health for you, your families and your communities. “For the message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.’ Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” (1 Corinthians 1:18-20). These are the words of Saint Paul, in which he clearly demonstrates the newness of the message he had both received, and was now sharing.

The world around us has its own definitions of what is ‘foolish’ and ‘wise’, and what is believable and farcical. For the world, the message of a God loving humanity to the extent of Incarnation, and then being persecuted, convicted, sentenced and executed by that same humanity makes no sense. Yet it is in this very message of putting oneself aside that we find the true strength of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and of the Christian message He has called us to live.

It is relatively simple to mask ourselves behind a façade of strength, an illusion of confidence and a perception of power, and in many cases, that will be enough to satisfy the person hiding behind the screen and those whom he or she seeks to convince. In living the Christian message however, we must sometimes be vulnerable, and even appear weak and defeated; but this, surprisingly, is where our strength is found. Once people see someone defeated they expect nothing, let alone victory, and this is why the empty tomb and the risen Lord were a striking blow that not only caused confusion, but instilled a sense of fear, into those who had doubted Him.

In our own lives we will have opportunities to choose either to be winners or perceived losers; to appear to have the upper hand and be strong, or to sometimes give way and be perceived to have failed. Our Lord chose the latter for the greater good, knowing that the real victory was truly His, and ours through Him.

In agreeing to ascend to the Cross, after having been tried, humiliated and convicted by His enemies, it was obvious that this would appear to be a defeat, but then how great the victory that would follow would be. The fact that the angels announced that “He is risen, He is not here” (Matthew 28:6) was a true proclamation of the omnipotence of our God. Nothing could contain Him, especially the humanity that He Himself had created. Saint John of Damascus reminds us that our Lord ‘was tried and overcame in order that He might prepare victory for us and give [us] power to overcome.’ This is a message to us all, that it is not in the appearance of power, but in genuine power itself, that we should place significance.

ἡ μὴ κρυφθήσεται ἡ πόλις ἡ ἐστηκεν ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος | *A city set on a hill cannot be hidden*

As Christians we are called to put others before us, to forgive and indeed to even "bless those who curse us" (Matthew 5:44). The result of this is by no means weakness, but it is the true power that stems from the empty tomb, and from the Resurrection of the crucified Lord Himself. As we celebrate the risen Lord, we are reminded that His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9), and proclaim that He is the God of Gods and Lord of Lords, Risen Indeed for us and for all the world around us.

As Christians we must always be mindful of the pain of others, and as ambassadors of Christ, do all we can to alleviate the suffering of those around us. We are called to share the Good News of the Gospel, which may often simply translate into being a source of hope, mercy, forgiveness, light, and faithful prayer for those in need. This is most prevalent when considering issues of poverty, inequality and injustice that directly impact so many in Britain and around the world, and our role in supporting those who suffer, and reassuring them of a God Who never abandons humanity (Hebrews 10:23).

It has brought me such joy to visit and pray with you all during Holy Week, and to spend time with the community as a whole, a blessing for which I am incredibly grateful. I also look forward to spending Easter Sunday with you when we celebrate together as a Diocese for the first time.

I wish you, your families, your loved ones, your communities and your parishes, the blessings of the Risen Lord, and ask that you continue to pray for me and our diocese as we seek to serve Him daily.

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a cross symbol above the name 'Angaelos'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the bottom of the name.

+Angaelos
Archbishop of London

Feast of the Glorious Resurrection
30 Baramhat 1734 AM
8 April 2018 AD