



Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney 2016 Easter Message

Christians have used many symbols in the past two thousand years.

Ancient Christians used the sign of a fish (whose letters in Greek provided an acronym for Jesus) – more recently middle east Christians undergoing persecution used the letter N – for Nazarene, to identify as followers of Jesus of Nazareth.

But the most universal symbol of all is the cross. Even that is being targeted now in China, where authorities are removing crosses from churches.

In fact, religious freedom is under threat around the world.

It is strange that the cross should be feared for its power, because in Jesus' time a cross meant execution – it meant failure and death.

But the great power in the symbol of the cross for us is that it is empty.

Yes, Jesus died on the cross but he was raised from the dead.

The resurrection of Jesus was not merely a resuscitation, because he rose not to die again but to inaugurate a new era beyond this age of death, disease and decay.

We say that people who have been resuscitated get a second chance at life – maybe you know someone for whom that has happened.

The resurrection of Jesus means a second chance for all of us, if we will accept it — a chance for new life, eternal life, as our sins are nailed to the cross so that we too shall rise with him.

Dr Glenn N Davies
Archbishop of Sydney
Easter AD 2016