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**Amid a deep cost of living crisis in the UK where so many are struggling and war rages abroad in the Ukraine, Bishop Martin's Easter message is about hope in a troubled world.**

*"Easter is about an unbreakable bond. Every year I am struck by a different layer of meaning about Easter.*

*"I see something new, though of course it's not new at all – I just hadn't seen or grasped it before. And as each year passes, I think what I am seeing is becoming simpler, clearer. This year I am seeing in a way I have not seen before that Easter is about this unbreakable bond. Most of us are painfully aware of what is broken or breaking. Whether that is because of the challenge so many face with the cost of living crisis, or the suffering and uncertainty provoked by the war in Ukraine. Or it may be the state of our environment, or because of more local concerns perhaps particularly because of personal fears, we find ourselves carrying the sense that things are just not right.*

*So many people, of spiritual faith and with none, give their time tirelessly to help others who are struggling both in Suffolk and beyond with everything from food banks to environmental initiatives, such as planting more trees and protecting our local wildlife, to opening our homes to refugees from a war zone. But the state of the world, and sometimes of our own lives, can still leave us bewildered, wondering what next. It is in these moments I realise that I am held by an unbreakable bond.*

*And I recognise that bond when I place myself in the Easter story. When I imagine myself as one of the disciples, despairing, bewildered, frightened that the one in whom they had placed their hopes, the one in whom they found acceptance and love, has been killed.*

*Their world wasn't just not right – it has totally fallen apart.*

*I find it hard to imagine what those few days must have been like.*

*And then comes the extraordinary experience of coming face to face with Jesus again, back from death, risen from the dead. I have no doubt of the reality of that experience, of the reality of the resurrection – how else could their despair be turned to such incredibly courageous hope? Hope that led them to act bravely even though the authorities now sought to kill them.*

*And so the church was born. But I don't just have to imagine myself in that story - as for many of us, I have come to know the truth and reality of the resurrection in my own life – and the courage that brings.*

*That is the unbreakable bond.*

*It is the unbreakable bond by which God holds us through everything we face, the bond of love that brings life out of death, the bond of love that inspires us in whatever we face to have courage and gives us all the hope we need."*

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