**Thursday 2 April 2026**







Bishop Joanne's Easter Message 2026



Easter assures us that nothing, not hardship or death, can separate us from the love of God, offering hope to a world that faces so much suffering. Even in a world filled today with conflict, war and injustice, Easter brings the message that love has won and God's promises can be trusted. Christ's resurrection triumphs over the broken world's darkness, fear and death.

At Easter, we are invited to trust in a living God who shares in our suffering and brings new life. This season calls us to move from despair to joy, carrying the light of faith. As Christians we arrive at Easter Sunday via the events of Holy Week. We travel with Jesus from Palm Sunday as he enters Jerusalem on a humble donkey, to sharing a last supper with his disciples, and then experiencing the pain of crucifixion in the Garden of Gethsemane. It's no wonder that we can feel all wrung out by the time we get to Easter.

Jesus was put to death on a cross by those who hated what he stood for. After his crucifixion, he was buried in a tomb, and a stone rolled across the entrance. But then we

reach Easter morning. The sun comes up and it's a new day. The stone has been rolled away, and Jesus's tomb is empty. He is risen again! There is no more striving needed; the work has been done, and we know that we are saved.

The risen Christ does not simply promise us life after death. He draws us into life before death — into courage, forgiveness, hope and joy now.

John's gospel, a kind of eyewitness account, focusses in on the moment when Jesus's friend Mary Magdalene finds the tomb empty, and Jesus gone. I love the way he tells the story of how the resurrection was made known to the world. Like athletes in a relay race, those first believers passed on the story of how Jesus defeated death. You couldn't make it up.

Mary Magdalene, who is full of fear, tells Peter and John. Peter and John run to the tomb. They are scared, and they go home. Weeping, Mary tells the angels. Weeping some more, Mary tells the gardener... who she then recognizes as Jesus. He tells her to tell his brothers. And she tells the disciples, "I have seen the Lord!"

Choosing ordinary people, especially women and fishermen, to tell everyone that there's a place waiting for them in heaven may seem like a crazy decision – but it worked. They passed the truth on; they ran the resurrection relay. Because of their experience of seeing the risen Jesus, his followers went from fear to courage. By preaching that he was alive, they put their own lives in danger. Some were persecuted or imprisoned. Some died for their faith.

But they passed the baton on, telling the good news that Jesus lives, running the resurrection relay. And they brought hope, for they passed on nothing less than the promise of everlasting life. That hope is as powerful now as it was in those early days.

Our hope as Christians is founded on the resurrection, God's sign to the world that his love can never be defeated, even by sin and death. Our hope is founded on what God has already done in history. And it's founded on what God is still doing today, even in our own troubled times.

In churches around England this Easter season, people are being baptised and confirmed. Each of them, adults and children, will have received the truth of the gospel from someone among their families, friends, schools and church communities. Someone passed the baton on to them.

We can all be people who pass on the baton of faith. We can pass it on when we stand up and say what we believe – even when that might be unpopular in the world. We can pass it on by sharing the hope and joy that come from knowing that Jesus is walking right beside us now, assuring each of us that a place awaits us with him in heaven. We can pass it on in the market square, in the workplace, at school or college, among our families and friends. We can sing it from the rooftops – and we can also tell it quietly, with servant-hearted actions, showing love and compassion to those in need. Passing on the baton doesn't need to feel like a burden. No: when we're overflowing with joy because we have seen the risen Jesus, sharing that joy is the most natural thing in the world to do. Pass it on!

And if we have days when we're uncertain of our own faith or feel daunted by all the effort of living a Christian life, remember this: we don't need to be great athletes to be Christians. We just need to peer into the empty tomb. Feel Jesus standing beside us. Run the race to tell others that we have seen the Lord. Choose life, eternal life.

So, this Easter, take the baton. Pass it on. And join the resurrection relay.

### Together we Pray

Archdeacon Sam will be leading Together we Pray next week, from Tuesday 6 April 8.30am on the Bishop's Facebook page.




*Copyright © 2026 Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, All rights reserved.*
This email is generated from the Communications Office at the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

**Our mailing address is:**
Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich, Suffolk, England IP1 1UQ

Add us to your address book

unsubscribe from this list  update subscription preferences

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>
*why did I get this?*  unsubscribe from this list  update subscription preferences
Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich · St Nicholas Centre, 4 Cutler Street · Ipswich · Suffolk, England IP1 1UQ · United Kingdom