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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Easter message 2014 - The Right Reverend Stuart Robinson
Anglican Bishop, Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn

This Easter we look forward to welcoming the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince George to Canberra.

No doubt, they will be welcomed by cheering curb-side crowds struggling for a glimpse and bearing gifts for a child who may become king one day.

This Easter, we remember another king who came not with a motorcade but on a working donkey. Before long, the cheers turned to jeers. As this king carried his cross to Calvary, everyone turned away. While the world averted its eyes, God offered everyone the gift of eternal life.

This new life is one where reconciliation and peace rather than violence is the way to get things done. It's where compassion rather than indifference is how we deal with suffering. It's where opportunity and wholeness trumps hopelessness and despair.

On Good Friday, Jesus took our worst so that on Easter morning we could be reconciled with him and become a people characterized by peace, compassion and a graciousness that offers others opportunities for a better life.

On Palm Sunday, many of us will be standing with those who fled war torn lands to find a better life in Australia. They wanted to give their children the gift of peace, compassion and opportunity that many of us take for granted. They have been imprisoned for taking unimaginable risks on the high seas while those who profit from their pain reap unfair gains.

Many well-intentioned people try to keep us from seeing what is happening in those overseas prisons. Many try to keep those detained from speaking or seeking legal advice.

But we will not avert our eyes. Instead, we pray that those who value a 'fair go for all' will stand up for those who cannot.

If our churches have learnt anything from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse it is that we cannot avert our eyes or be silent about behaviour that destroys people's very souls.

And so we pray that we may yet follow the king on a donkey where peace, compassion and opportunity should be available to everyone - especially those whose lives are marred by violence, indifference, hopelessness and despair.

The Right Reverend Stuart Robinson
Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn
11 April 2014

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