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An Easter Reflection on Leadership

Plenty of opinion polls tell us that Australians are disillusioned with their leaders. In this Easter week disillusionment has hit the sporting arena with disastrous choices by the Australian cricket captain.

Basic to being a leader is that people want to follow you. If they only do what you want because of threats or punishment, you may be an absolute ruler, but you are not a leader.

While gloom and cynicism about leadership seem widespread, every now and then the negativity is punctuated by light and we see true leadership. Only last week a brave French gendarme, an avowedly devout Catholic Christian, swapped places with a checkout assistant being used as a human shield by a brutal terrorist, and was shot dead as a result. Rightly named a national hero, he is a person we would be proud to follow.

People wanted to follow Jesus. The evidence of original sources and the facts about the beginning of the Christian movement point to this. Jesus deliberately rejected the sort of power admired in the Roman Empire or the priestly power of his religious enemies. In fact the Frenchman was imitating Christ, for both chose self-sacrifice, not self-promotion. Jesus also swapped places, taking the bullet humanity deserves for all its cruelty and greed. The effectiveness of Jesus' sacrifice is demonstrated by his resurrection, an apparently impossible event that galvanised early Christians to follow Jesus to the death.

Jesus declares that he does not know those who use the church as a front for self-indulgence and power grabs. Real Christians are those who know Jesus and imitate his love, service and self-giving. This Easter I encourage you all to investigate the facts and consider whether Jesus is the leader you too might follow to forgive your past, transform your present and guarantee your future.

Bishop Trevor Edwards,

28th March 2018