

# April 2026

## Bishop Malcolm writes...

### Let's not be April fools.

At school I was taught that the French say 'Cocorico' instead of 'April Fool'. I have believed this for years - but it turns out to be fake. I may be the last credulous victim of a long running prank. The French equivalent of 'April Fool' is not 'Cocorico' but 'Poisson d'Avril!' or 'April Fish'. All a bit fishy, anyway.



Nonetheless, 'cocorico', or 'cockadoodledoo' can be a bit of a tease too. There's history here. In Edmond Rostand's 1910 play *Le Chantecler* the rooster's self-important delusion is that it is his duty to announce the day – that if he fails to do his duty the sun cannot rise and day will not begin.

And in the gospels, Jesus tells Peter that by the time the cockerel crows he will deny knowing Jesus three times. When this happens, Peter weeps bitterly. The truth about ourselves is sometimes hard to swallow.

Cockadoodledoo is a mocking signal of untruths told and loyalties lost. Of moments missed, and opportunities wasted. Wake up! Wake up! Wake up to what is going on around you! Don't sleepwalk into disaster. The events of the first Easter, and the events that lead up to it, are remote from our 21st century world, but they are real. And they are relevant as ever.

They are real because of the places they happened, still there today. A so called 'Holy Land' brutalised by violence, hatred, and division. Jerusalem, towards which Jesus set his face, to the city and the confrontation that would inevitably happen there. To the upper room, where he would break bread and share wine with them. Where their weary, dusty feet were washed by the one who would next day give his life for the world. To the place also where Jesus, three days later, would suddenly appear, behind locked doors, and startle them all with his greeting, 'Peace!'

Not dead at all, but alive, with them: a new beginning, and a whole new world.

This is the city where Jesus gave himself in love. 'Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing.' Whilst they could be a comment on current events, these words were Jesus' prayer for his torturers and executioners, and for all who colluded with the scandal of an innocent man condemned to die. God is with us the suffering and death of Jesus. God is with us in the joy of resurrection, and in the new creation that springs from the love of God in Jesus.

How we long for Easter peace this year! How we pray for the peoples of the Holy Land, and for real, just, and lasting peace! We think especially of the people of the Anglican churches across the Middle East at this time. We don't know how or when this prayer will be answered. Though, as the writer to the Hebrews says, 'but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.' Hebrews 2.9

+ Malcolm Repton

### The Rt Revd Malcolm Macnaughton Bishop of Repton

If in addition to praying for peace in the middle east you would like to give, please join Bishop Libby and me in contributing to the Good Friday appeal for the work of the Al Ahli hospital in Gaza, serving the sick and injured of that community at this time? Donations can be sent directly via this link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/24585#!/DonationDetails>