



Thu 24 March 2016

Australia has many things to celebrate. While footy is a celebration of athleticism and the ANZACs remind us about courage under fire, Easter demonstrates the importance of second chances.

Second chances are Australia's national story. We're not simply the land of the long weekend but the place where getting a fair go matters.

Our convict forebears arrived on these distant shores often thinking it to be a god-forsaken land. Yet many made a new life for themselves that was simply impossible in the old country.

Dig through anyone's family photo albums and you'll see countless stories of second chances. You'll meet ancestors who made a fresh start here, free from all the strife, poverty, vindictiveness and resentment that characterised

their villages, cities and nations?

But second chances don't come cheap. Although most of our ancestors discovered fresh opportunities for themselves and their children on these shores, indigenous people paid an unjustly high price in the form of dispossession, poverty and invisibility in their own country.

Easter and the resurrection is about second chances for everyone.

At the cross, we find the opportunity to start afresh. We find the power to make a new life in its shadow. Through the cross, we discover the strength that goodness brings as we are set straight after a lifetime bent out of shape by pride, anger, envy, greed and indifference. But we only get second chances because of Good Friday.

On that dark day, Jesus died at the hands of people who were only concerned with entrenching their own privilege, passing the buck and profiting from violence. He paid the ultimate price so that we might get a second chance and know the dignity, respect and responsibility that come with it.

God's goodness would not be defeated by evil. God brought out the best from what humanity dished out that day and he does still, each and every day.

It takes generosity and goodwill to offer others a second chance in life, especially when it is undeserved. It takes courage and honesty to ask for a second chance.

So please enjoy the holiday, fruit buns and all the chocolate eggs you can find or ask for. They all speak about our need for a second chance and the lengths that Jesus went to make it a reality for now and ever more.