

## **Views from the Pews: The Virus Stole My Easter**

As a kid growing up in the village on the island of Motalava in Vanuatu, Easter to us is so special in so many ways. It is a day of feasting, dancing, and celebration. Celebrating the Resurrection of Christ. Palm Sunday was joy, as people marched from villages holding palm leaves singing “Hosanna to the King”.

In late December 2019 and early January 2020, the trumpet of Virus COVID-19 sounded across the globe, bringing chaos and fear to the people near and wide. The unseen enemy began to invade our land, causing lockdown of the whole country. People were and are very sick. Health services were overwhelmed. Whanau hid in their homes from the unseen enemy who roams around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to infect. April came and churches were closed. Holy week started with the world focusing not on a triumphant entry to Jerusalem, but on masks, gowns, gloves and tests. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday came and gone, but the enemy the virus marched on.

I woke up early on Easter morning, the traditional Easter celebration was not happening. **“My Easter was stolen by virus COVID-19”**. But did the virus steal my Easter? The Power of Resurrection is stronger and mightier than virus COVID-19. Easter came just the same. But this time it is more special and personal. Everyone has the taste of Easter in a special way. The tomb is empty and so is churches, parks, beaches, pubs and restaurants.

2020 Easter was celebrated in the homes. Families spending time together, making connections, building relationships, and enjoying the company of one another. Families jumping on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram to join together in prayer and worship either live-stream or pre-recording. So, what is unique about this Easter, you may ask? “Obviously, Easter came without bunnies. “Easter also came without egg hunt”. As an Island girl, I wonder if the world got it wrong or did, they just do not get it? “That Easter does not come from the store”. “And Easter means more than eggs and bunnies. It is about

the empty tomb. It is about Jesus' victory over death, doom, and gloom.

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