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EASTER MESSAGE: A TIME TO REFLECT ON NEW PERSPECTIVES

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For me personally, the Easter period this year is quite distinct. Just two days before Good Friday, Indonesians will be giving democracy a major boost by exercising our individual rights to vote in the general elections. I believe this year's general election will significantly affect the future of democracy in our country.

Every day, this year, we have been exposed to the so-called "black campaign," which is a combination of fake news and hate speech promoted through various social media platforms. The 'war' has begun between two rival groups of two presidential candidates, which I can best describe as a national political party versus a religious political party, causing tension at the grass roots and polarizing ethnic and religious groups.

The elections are at the same time as Christians prepare to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I am preparing myself to see his love for us in this complex political situation.

It is undeniable that in the prevailing election campaign period in Indonesia, many Christians can feel trapped in anger and confusion. When we promote peace and justice, we are mocked as hypocrites, cowards and not true believers. This political situation has also created a gap among Christians. Indeed, across Asia, especially in the Middle East, we find church members in similar situations, crying out to God for peace and justice.

How could we see Jesus' sacrifice in a 'political war'? The death of Jesus is a death in struggle and pain. His sacrifice renews our lives. "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). On Easter Sunday, every time we remember Jesus' blood and sacrifice, we remember that we are new creatures. Our tired souls are refreshed by his grace. Our old perspectives are renewed by his love. God does not promise a new world or new reality. Rather, God gives us a new perspective to seeing reality.

It is my prayer that in the midst of political and similar situations constantly fraught with uncertainty and tension, the Easter message of hope and a new reality in Jesus Christ will help to heal the heart-breaking situations around us.

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