Jesus provides us with a framework of trust

Hope lies beneath, writes Felicity Amery.

WHETHER you have been getting together with family and attending religious services, catching up on jobs, doing something you have done before or considering the state of our world over the Easter weekend, have you pondered the question of where is hope?

Around the nation families are gathering for reunions, dodging showers of rain, intent on lighting the barbie. For many the day will go well, celebrating life, belonging to community and revealing in all that is Australian. Elsewhere it will require a few too many beers to survive the traditional family argument about politics and each other.

Recently my three children felt it was my professional development to partake in an experience of extreme sports. After categorically ruling out bungee jumping, I agreed to what could be the ultimate Easter experience of whitewater rafting.

What followed was a two-hour jostle over rapids and down a series of falls, the climax being a seven metre drop into the ice-blue waters of the Waikato River.

Several aspects of this amazing ride are permanently imprinted in my mind. The instructor sat in the back and worked his novice team, building our skills, muscles we never knew we had and our awareness of the stunning but dangerous landscape, equipping us for a complete immersion experience.

The risk of falling out of the boat was high and if we panicked, waving our arms and legs around in fear, we would drown. Hope? Listen deeply, then row hard and in time.

In Australia, for some people, the Easter weekend is time for some extreme remembering of the significance of the violent death and restored life of Jesus the Christ. This ancient story of violence and non-violence is the journey of a prophet who offered radical criticism of the existing political system and the oppressive religious and social order of his day. For many generations and people, Jesus’ journey has become a personal symbol or image for a path to spiritual, psychological and communal transformation that leads to a new way of being a human.

Whatever you think about the church, this is an immeasurably great man who advocates for radical living and a gracious way of living. It provides people with a firm backdrop of trust and takes care of what separates humanity from God and from each other. This framework enables us to build life-giving relationships and makes possible our personal transformation and, ideally and ultimately, the transformation of the world.

This Easter Monday, might hope be in the life-threatening task of working together to face head on the enormous challenges in our community?

Might hope lie in our willingness to brave the complex task of building relationships with those we understand least? Might hope lie in our willingness to be part of a transforming world?

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