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Autor: Rust, Rinaldo

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Editorial..

Soon we will once again be celebrating Easter, the greatest of all Christian Festivals.

It may surprise many that the name of Easter has no religious origin but is derived from the name of a Teutonic goddess of Spring, (according to my dictionary).

For us Swiss-Kiwis who were born in Switzerland it is natural that we combine the image of Easter with Springtime and even after 44 years I find it odd to have to translate the 'feeling of Easter' with all its spiritual significance into an autumn setting. From the earliest of my childhood days I can remember the image that Easter in Switzerland left in my mind.. There was the awakening of Spring with sunshine and spring flowers, the traditional festivities with Easter eggs and Easter chocolate. The joy of relief as School holidays had begun. But there were also the

traumatic events of the (Karwoche), the week preceding Easter Sunday with all its deep spiritual meanings of betrayal, selfgiving sacrifice, despair and death on the Cross. With the exception of the spiritual aspects some of the Easter memories were somewhat displaced when coming to New Zealand. Autumn can never replace Spring and the analogy of the Preachers sermon about the Resurrection of Christ with the new beginning or the re-birth in nature as in spring time, is not applicable either.

But the most significant events commemorated by all Christians during the week before Easter are not bound by any time in nature's calendar. I think they can be summed up in the one word "sacrifice".

A word that can conjure up lots of images of noble characters. A word who's meaning is in conflict with modern living in the 21st century.

Who wants to sacrifice him or herself for others in our day? Sadly we find it understandable that young couples find it difficult to sacrifice their time and money to bring up children in a world that demands self fulfillment and never ending enjoyment of the individual.

And yet the sacrifice of "one for another" is surely the most noble of human endeavours. It is certainly the highest ideal of Christian teachings. We all know of people of all walks of life who have left a legacy of self sacrifice. In the history of the world there are the ones that became universally well known. It is good to remember all of them with affection and admiration. At the same time we ought to remember and commend the people sacrificing themselves at present, maybe in our circle of acquaintances or friends who's names are never mentioned in headlines of newspapers.

Despite all of our world's calamities there are lots of people who dedicate themselves and sacrifice their lives for others. Easter is a time when we can celebrate the reward of the most perfect example of self sacrifice as on the Cross, as well as the humble efforts of people imitating that example to the best of their ability.

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COORDINATOR IN NZ FOR THE SWISS ABROAD YOUTH EXCHANGE SCHEME

MRS. NICOLE HELSDON, 58A MARELLEN DR, RED BEACH, OREWA, Ph.09 426-0927

EDITOR: RINALDO RUST, 242 TE PAHU RD. R.D.5.

HAMILTON, Ph/FAX (07) 871-9946 E-MAIL: RINALDORUST@XTRA.CO.NZ

CLUB REPRESENTATIVES

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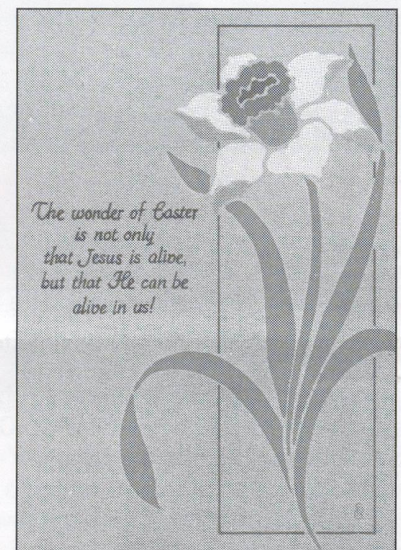
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