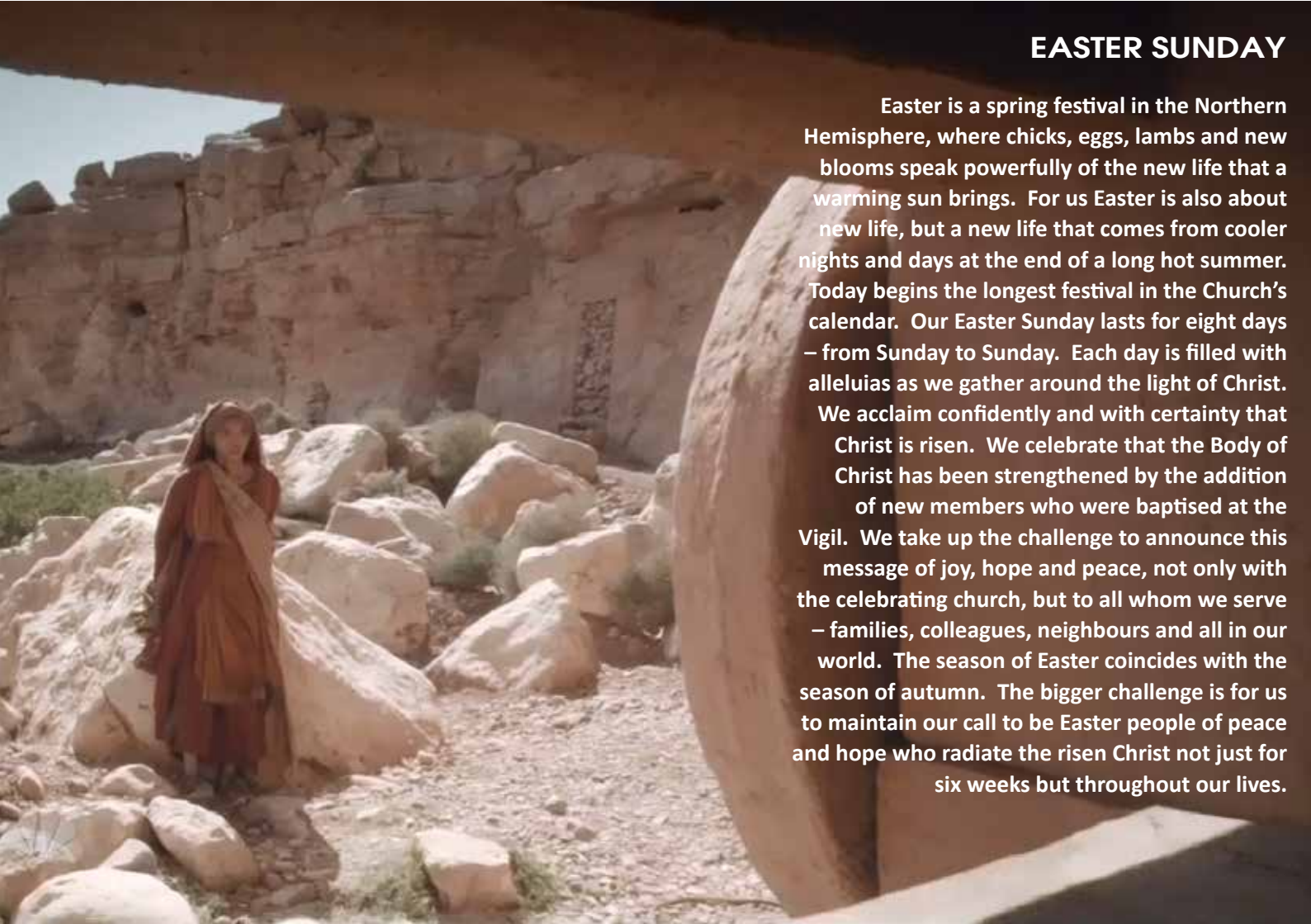


EASTER SUNDAY

A woman in a brown robe stands in a rocky, ancient stone structure. The scene is set in a desert-like environment with large, light-colored rocks and a stone wall in the background. The lighting is warm, suggesting a sunny day. The woman is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking towards the camera. The overall atmosphere is one of historical significance and tranquility.

Easter is a spring festival in the Northern Hemisphere, where chicks, eggs, lambs and new blooms speak powerfully of the new life that a warming sun brings. For us Easter is also about new life, but a new life that comes from cooler nights and days at the end of a long hot summer. Today begins the longest festival in the Church's calendar. Our Easter Sunday lasts for eight days – from Sunday to Sunday. Each day is filled with alleluias as we gather around the light of Christ. We acclaim confidently and with certainty that Christ is risen. We celebrate that the Body of Christ has been strengthened by the addition of new members who were baptised at the Vigil. We take up the challenge to announce this message of joy, hope and peace, not only with the celebrating church, but to all whom we serve – families, colleagues, neighbours and all in our world. The season of Easter coincides with the season of autumn. The bigger challenge is for us to maintain our call to be Easter people of peace and hope who radiate the risen Christ not just for six weeks but throughout our lives.