



The Anglican Church in America Christmas Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In just a few days, we will celebrate the festival of Christmas. We will gather with family and friends, observe the wonderful services offered in our parish churches and sing the traditional hymns and carols that are so much a part of our lives. And through it all, we will be embraced by wonder, a wonder that urges us to know, if only a tiny bit, what Christmas truly means.

Above all, Christmas is a celebration of the Incarnation, a reminder of the time that God in Jesus Christ emptied himself so that He could become one with us. In an extraordinary act, God chose to enter human time and embrace the finite lives of His children on earth. And though we know that Jesus is indeed Emmanuel, God with us, we are often surprised each year when he comes to us and is born anew in our hearts and minds.

The great theologians have long attempted to teach us what the Incarnation means. And the great councils of the church have revealed that Jesus is both perfect God and perfect man, complete and indivisible. We receive this message and, as Christians, we accept it for the truth that it reveals.

But there is something deeper and more profound at work here; far more profound than all the work of the scholars and theologians; much deeper than the marvelous work of the great councils of the church. It is God's love, a love that is born to us again and again. The wonder is that God could love His imperfect and errant creation with such devotion that He would give himself to us. But that is precisely what happens at Christmas.

When we see the Christ child, we know of his frailty. We wonder how he will survive the enormous challenges he will find in this world. But we know also of his love. It is the power of that love that endures and that will transform all who embrace it. And as we reach out to embrace the God who will be born to us again this year, we know that he too reaches out to embrace us. He embraces us with a love that asks for our love in return. He asks us to know him and to love him; he asks us to search the quiet and lost regions of our hearts for a place where he may find his Bethlehem, a place where he may be born to us. It is in that place, that Bethlehem of our hearts, where we are reborn in him again this year.

Merry Christmas to you all!

Your Brother in Christ,

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