

Homily. Christmas 2022.

A people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; On those who live in a land of deep shadows a light has shone. So said the Prophet Isaiah. In the Northern hemisphere in mid Winter even nature herself makes this hope and promise real. For those people from now onwards every day gets a little bit lighter and brighter. For us though, on the other side and at the other end of the world, the light of Summer is already shining all around us. Here nature is on the side of light, telling us that the birth of the Light of the World is right here, right now.

Every Christmas though, I can't help but think of those for whom this isn't such a bright and happy time; the poor, the war torn, the sick, bereaved and lonely. For these people we pray and we promise to bring and to be their Christ-light in the days and months ahead. By praying and promising so we acknowledge that, yes, Christ is born and a son has indeed been given to us all. Nevertheless, we also realise that the light of the Son of God still has a ways to go until it fills every darkened corner of our world touching every life. We know too that we are the people the Lord has chosen to help bring God's bright light of love and peace to others.

This is especially so now when one era is dying and a new one is coming to birth; a time of great change, of economic uncertainty, ongoing wars and pandemics, a time of so much greed, deceit, spiritual apathy, moral emptiness and pain. At this moment the light that surrounds us is begging to be shared. The brightness and warmth of the Christ child, God's greatest utterly unselfish gift to us all, is calling us to make Him better known and welcomed by our words and deeds and by our way of living.

This is not to request great and difficult things of us; No, just good and caring things, small as they may be but done with true love, care and thoughtfulness. After all, the mighty God of all creation chose to come as a little baby in a manger in a tiny town tucked away on the very edge of a great empire. He came to us as vulnerable and dependent as we were and in many ways still are. Of course, the news media hangs on big things and great events, but God works with us and through us in the small efforts we make every day by listening and by giving and by trying to be patient, merciful and generous of spirit to each other.

So, indeed, Christmas has come to us once again. Rightly we celebrate the friendliness of God with us, on our side forever. It's good that we've come together to adore Him who bears the true light of God's justice and hope to our world. Along with the Angels over Bethlehem we joyfully sing out our thanks and praise to the Lord, all the time praying deeply that, in the bringing of peace to all people of good will, God will keep working with us until the Lord's saving light shines forth everywhere, upon everyone.