

## Tilt the balance towards peace

**Video Christmas message 2015 by Dr Philip Freier, Anglican Primate of Australia and Archbishop of Melbourne: visit**

<http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/Christmas>

Christmas this year, as so often, will be celebrated in the dark shadow of violence and fear, from terrorism to domestic violence. This is no surprise; it has always been so. Jesus, too, was born into a world of cruelty, violence and exploitation.

He knew first-hand what the worst of human anger was like, and how irrational human cruelty can be.

And yet, by His coming into the world, Jesus brings us hope. Born as a baby, Jesus brings the divine message that being human is full of possibilities for good. To be human is a gift from God: it is a gift to be used for life.

The baby born in a stable appears so weak, so far from prestige and power. But in Jesus' life we see life and its possibilities.

Possibilities of:

Broken relationships reconciled;

Barriers of race, power, religion and wealth overcome;

Self-interest turned to generosity.

Hatreds transformed to love;

Jesus was not ignorant of the darkness of human hatred. We see it all around us in the news, on social media and, sadly, all too often we experience it in our own lives. But Jesus brings life. He told His disciples, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

That contrast has been important for nearly 2000 years. Jesus, in taking human life as a baby, shows us how to be fully human and fully alive: alive to each other and alive to God who gives us life. Therefore the Christian way should be one of love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.

Every person who follows Jesus and looks to his way of life, of peace, tilts the balance away from hatred. This Christmas, I invite you to pause, to consider Jesus' way of peace, his healing of people in body, mind and spirit, his teaching of compassion and justice, his bringing of hope.

Jesus' birth is the opportunity to look at our own lives and discover the seeds of hope again.

**To view the Christmas message, visit [www.melbourneanglican.org.au/christmas](http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/christmas)**