

Jesus – God’s love letter to the world

YouTube Christmas message 2013

from Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Philip Freier

Mother Teresa said, ‘I am a small pencil in the hands of God who is writing his love letter to the world.’ Just as this was true of Mother Teresa, it was also true – but infinitely more so - of Jesus.

Jesus – God’s magnificent love letter to the world – was, St John tells us, how God ‘showed his love among us’.

And what a love it was, and remains – a radical and revolutionary love which calls us to love our enemies, forgive unconditionally, feed the hungry, be compassionate to the poor and offer hospitality to the stranger.

Whatever you do for the least of these, Jesus says, you do for me.

In Jesus, heaven and earth met. Even when Jesus was a baby, the light which attended his birth proclaimed the dawning of a new reality for the world.

When Mary and Joseph took him to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate him to God, the devout elder Simeon discerned the truth that here in Jesus was the light of the world. Simeon had been told by God that he would not die until he had seen his saviour, and joyfully declared:

Lord, now let your servant go in peace;

Your word has been fulfilled.

My eyes have seen the salvation

You have prepared in the sight of every people,

A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people, Israel.

These powerful and moving words, from the Gospel of Luke, are still recited by Christians all over the world as part of our evening prayers.

Jesus said that he came that we might have life, and have it to the full (Gospel of John Chapter 10, verse 10).

I invite you, this Christmas, to open your hearts and minds to hear his life-giving message afresh, and to rejoice with Simeon in the baby whose light still shines in the darkness.

The despair, violence and suffering of the world will never overcome this light. As Martin Luther King once said: ‘Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.’