

Christmas: the promise of a different future

Video Christmas message 2014 by the Anglican Primate of Australia, Melbourne Archbishop Philip Freier: visit www.melbourneanglican.org.au/christmas

As the world becomes more focused on its sea of troubles it is easy to believe the fracture lines between peoples are inevitably etched deeply on our future.

The world into which Jesus was born had this same heavy weight of foreboding. His own people, the Jews, chafed under the heel of the Roman Empire, and his family knew displacement and exile.

Christmas celebrates God's action in human affairs to give a different future, one of peace, reconciliation and hope.

Christians understand that the birth of Jesus is the fulfilment of God's promise to renew our relationship with him. Even at his birth Jesus serves to unify many of these deeply etched identities in the ancient world, be they poor shepherds watching their flocks or oriental monarchs.

Christmas tells us about the unfolding of God's promise then and now. It tells us about the direction of God's working amongst people. And it challenges our imaginations as we look at the world.

Australians of every background can find good reason to be dismayed about contemporary events near and far. Conflict is part of the human condition. But Jesus' birth points us all to a different reality. His birth reveals a power to change and transform that is greater than ourselves.

The baby of Bethlehem remains the glory of God's people and a light to enlighten all those who live apart from God. He is the one sent from God to change human existence one person at a time and for all of us together.

Have a blessed celebration of Jesus' birth and may your Christmas bring you the knowledge of his love and peace.

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