

THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF KING'S LYNN

Bishop Alan Hopes' Christmas Message

Wednesday, December 23, 2020

The Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation

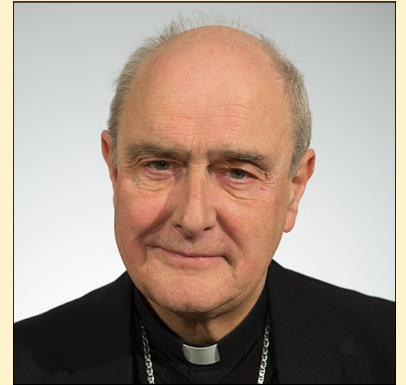
London Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 5HQ.

and

Holy Family Church

Field Lane, Gaywood, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 1AY

Bishop Alan Hopes reflects on a powerful season for human beings in his Christmas message.



Dear Friends,

Christmas is a powerful season for us human beings. We celebrate in joy the birthday of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

For many of us, it will be a celebration with our family and friends as we appreciate the gifts that God has given. For many others, however, every Christmas will be tinged with sadness as we remember the death of a loved one with whom we can no longer share this special time.

This year, Christmas will be a time of both joy and sorrow for so many. Hardship, sickness, isolation, fatigue, the possibility of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, fear of death – all the present challenges which the pandemic crisis has brought in its wake – these will tinge our celebration. It will not be perfect.

But this is exactly why Jesus Christ was born in the first place. This Child, who is our Lord and God made flesh to be like us, to live and die like us, was born into poverty in a cave, rejected, unrecognised, and isolated with Mary his Mother and with Joseph. Indeed, those of us who follow this Child today, reflect on the shadow cast upon Bethlehem: the wood of the Crib is destined to become the wood of the Cross.

The Almighty God, who created the cosmos, emptied himself of all glory, in order to feel what it is like to be us. He reaches down into our imperfect world, and then draws us up to himself, to show us the destiny he intended for each one of us when he created us: life with himself in perfect happiness, eternally in heaven. A wonderful exchange of places. Jesus Christ is the Word of Hope from heaven: that all shall be well – all manner of things shall be well.

For eternal happiness is not to be found here on earth. Our joys here are real joys, but they are fleeting. Life is fragile. Our material comfort and health is impermanent.

Jesus Christ, the Child born in a manger in Bethlehem, is our gateway to this eternal happiness and he opens this gateway for each one of us at Christmas. That is what we are [celebrating](#). That is why, in any circumstance, we can rejoice at Christmas: the day when the sun – the Son of God – rises to bring an end to the dark winter.

So, in whatever circumstance you find yourself right now, always try to remember that Jesus Christ was born for you. He comes to fill you with hope and confidence and to dispel your fears. His arms are wide open, beckoning you to welcome him into your home and into your heart – not just this Christmas, but every day of the year.

I wish you all a truly hope-filled and happy Christmas!