

# MODERATOR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

## CHRISTMAS FOR THE LONELY

Dear Friends

Christmas is a struggle for the lonely. Nothing compounds feelings of loneliness quite like seeing others celebrate a festival for families, and being asked common pleasantries such as if family are coming to visit. It's not the fault of Christmas but it's what happens. Christmas is hard on the lost. Who can begin to be found when everyone's so busy with each other that no one's even looking for the lost?

Christmas is tough for the unlovely. Those who feel rejected because of something they can't help, struggle to feel valued at a time when value becomes synonymous with price. Christmas is great but I feel for the marginalised people who are forgotten at this time of year: the lost, the lonely and the unloved.

I wonder if we could focus on making a difference this Christmas, even for just one person who lies completely outside the circle of our own family, someone who just won't get to celebrate unless we include them in some way.

Perhaps it's a person living on their own. Perhaps it's a solo parent living down the street. Perhaps it's a couple of little ones you've seen playing around your place and you're pretty sure they won't be getting much in the way of Christmas fare on the 25th. Whoever and however you choose to help, if we each make an extra effort it would make a huge difference.

I recently watched a wonderful video talk by Bryan Stevenson, Executive Director of The Justice Initiative, which among other things has saved many people from death row in America. The key phrase which still rings in my soul from that talk was the first point he made about justice: true justice requires proximity. That is, it requires us to get close to those who are suffering injustice. Isn't this what Jesus did by coming to earth on this amazing day we celebrate as Christmas? Isn't this the universe changing version of getting proximate? I certainly think so. I want us this year simply to ask ourselves who we are going to bring into our inner sanctum, to share with and to learn from, who is in the lost, lonely and unloved category.

I hope and pray that you might be greatly blessed this Christmas. Thank you for all you work and commitment to our Church. It makes a huge difference to me and to so many who travel with us in this journey of faith.

God bless you and yours this Christmas,



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