



# CHRISTMAS 2019

*A Letter from the Bishop*

**M**y dear people of the Anglican Network in Canada,  
It is a great joy to greet you at such a precious time! This precious time I refer to is, of course, Christmas.

Without necessarily knowing your particular situations or that of your families' this Christmas, I can know that the event of the birth of the very Son of God in Bethlehem and all that has followed from that birth—his sinless life, his death, resurrection, ascension and imminent return—is the most extraordinary development for you and for all people everywhere.

So, without a doubt, the celebration of Christmas is precious for all those who make room in their hearts for God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Consider two verses of the Bible. The first might not be considered as very Christmassy, but it really is! I have a friend who used this in the signature of his emails (which makes him a wise man in my books):

***"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." John 3:17***

The reason the Father sent the Son to visit this dark, needy world was entirely gracious: to rescue and save people, not condemn them. And if you, by faith, repent of your sin and ask him in, you yourself are automatically "in" and Christmas and all it means, and all that flowed from that great, humble-but-glorious birth, is yours forever!

The second verse is more typically associated with Christmas. The angel of God was comforting Joseph and assuring him that he should take Mary as his wife who was, though a virgin, pregnant and carrying the very Son of God. The angel makes this point about the naming of the baby:

***"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21***

Saving and rescuing are the reasons for the Season. Sin, and all that flowed to the whole human

race because of sin, have been completely dealt with by this Jesus. The rescue has been provided. All you have to do is accept the gift.

Speaking of gifts, the verse before John 3:17 says: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

What a gift! What a rescue! What a precious baby!  
And what a tragedy it would be to neglect or fail to receive the gift!

Please make sure you receive God's precious gift of himself in Jesus, his Son.  
Make this verse of this familiar carol real for you:

***"O holy Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray  
Cast out our sin and enter in  
Be born to us today  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell  
O come to us, abide with us  
Our Lord Emmanuel"***

And then as I try to exhort us all every week, please seize the opportunity in these precious days to open your mouth and speak to anyone and everyone about Jesus. They need him too, and he was born for them as well.

May I conclude, on behalf of the godly team of bishops and wives of ANiC that I am privileged to serve with, by praying God's richest blessings, which are all found in this Jesus alone, for you and all you love this Christmas and throughout the coming year!

Christmas blessings,



+ *Charlie*

The Right Reverend Charlie Masters  
Diocesan Bishop



Anglican Network  
in Canada