

## 2016 Advent through Christmas Penning

It's another year! According to Church Calendar, we move into another year with the coming of Advent, to prepare for the coming of Christmas: both to commemorate the coming of the Son of God to earth by taking up flesh and blood, and to prepare for the Second Coming of Christ.

As we are surrounded by busy urban life, people tend to do last-minute preparation for Christmas (or even postponing Christmas shopping to Boxing Day/Week shopping), perhaps we don't have time to do elaborate preparation and house decoration for Christmas any more. Yet we might have noted from our Gospel Reading a few weeks ago that there is at least one thing which Jesus expects of us for Christmas. He said: 'Yet when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

Yes, faith is the simple but best preparation we can have for Christmas, as it is the thermometer and engine to gauge and energize our ongoing relationship with God through Christ. For faith has already been planted in our hearts by God, waiting for us to exercise it in our daily thoughts, words and deeds. With faith comes our faithful response to God in all quarters of our life, so that we can live out the Christmas hope, peace, joy and love.

With that in mind, our Advent series this year gives us an example on life stories of how such Christmas hope, peace, joy and love can be and has been lived out with our participation in Anglican PWRDF (Primate's World Relief and Development Fund) for the world. The point here is: let us cast our minds and hearts towards living out faith – a simple, effective and meaningful way of preparing ourselves in Advent for the coming of Christmas!

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas,

*Partha Das*



## 2016 年將臨節及聖誕節牧者隨筆

時光飛逝，我們又進入「新的一年」——我說的當然是按「教會年曆」，當我們踏進「將臨節」以準備身心來迎接聖誕，我們便進入教會年曆中新的一年，而迎接聖誕則有雙重意義：一是紀念救主耶穌昔日降世為人以拯救世人，二是準備迎接基督的再臨。

現今世人很多都忘記了聖誕的意義，又往往慶祝聖誕的只剩下吃、喝、玩、樂和購物，就連購物都安排在聖誕後來爭取「節禮日」(Boxing Day / Week) 的購物折扣，大家又那有空想到好幾個星期前我們在唸福音經課時聽到耶穌提醒我們說：「人子來的時候，遇得見世上有信德嗎？」

不錯，信德（信心）是我們在聖誕 / 將臨節期間預備迎接主再來的最簡單而有效的準備，因為信心的行動反映並培育我們的人神關係。而上帝大清早已把信心栽在每人的心裏，等待我們各人用身、心、靈來行使信心，就能活出聖誕的盼望、和平、喜樂和仁愛。

因此我們今年的將臨節講座是取材於加拿大聖公會「大主教世界救助發展基金」的事工於世上不同地方的事蹟，來幫助大家思考上述主題。而重點是：讓我們在這將臨期裏，把身、心、靈都盡量投進信心的使用，以助我們能活出並帶給別人聖誕的意義：盼望、和平、喜樂與仁愛。謹祝願大家在將臨節和聖誕蒙主祝福。

*李志敏*

