

## 2018 Rector's Penning for 'Advent through Christmas'

Our relatively warm weather this year takes us to December, starting our 'Advent through Christmas' journey. It reminds me of an Austrian Christmas carol called 'Still, still, still', with part of its lyrics going: 'still, still, still . . . for all is hushed, the world is sleeping, Holy star its vigil keeping . . . sleep, sleep, sleep, 'tis the eve of our Savior's birth'.

Whilst the Carol depicts peace and joy of Christmas, I find the above quoted lyrics can serve (perhaps as an unintended, but nonetheless vivid) description of our current condition: slumbering without realizing that our warm days this year in fact has taken us into our 'Advent towards Christmas' journey. Perhaps it's only the Holy star that keeps the due vigil.

Yet we know that we are meant to be in our 'prayerful watchfulness' in Advent, to prepare ourselves for Christmas – for both our re-invitation of Christ into our hearts (as welcoming homes for the Holy Infant who brings hope, peace, joy and love, so that there won't be 'no place for him in the inn' any more); and for vigilance in waiting for the second coming of Christ (so that our hearts won't be weighed down with dissipation and worries of this life).

With that we can proceed to the latter part of the carol with its lyrics going: 'still, still, still . . . dream, dream, dream of the joyous day to come.'

May we all be blessed to calm down from our frenzy activities, so as to be reverentially still in vigilance, as we walk from Advent to Christmas to meet Christ in hope, peace, joy and love!

*Partha Das*



## 2018「將臨節至聖誕節期」牧者隨筆

在今年不算寒冷的氣溫下，我們在漫不經意之中就踏進了十二月，因而展開了我們的「將臨節至聖誕節」旅程。這就叫我想起一首名為「平安夜靜歌」的奧地利聖誕聖詩，當中一部分歌詞是如此說：「靜悄悄。。。萬籟俱寂，夜深人安靜，聖潔景星長夜照明。。。睡正甜，救主誕生。。。」

這聖誕聖詩主要是描述聖誕的平安和喜樂，但上面的歌詞也可以作為我們現況的描述：在不著意之中我們似乎待在睡夢中而沒有留意到在仍算暖和的氣溫下，將臨節已靜悄悄地來到我們中間，帶我們走往聖誕節，可是只有景星獨個兒警醒地照明長夜。

我們當然曉得在這兩個特別的宗教節期裏，我們該安靜下來，以準備走進聖誕的紀念和慶祝中：一面重新迎接救主基督進入我們心中（免得重踏二千年前「客店裏沒有地方讓祂誕生」的覆轍）；而另一面更以警醒禱告來等待基督的再臨，以致我們不必讓生命裏的憂慮和各樣叫我們分神的事情成為我們肩膊上的重擔。

這樣我們就可以隨著那聖詩繼續唱：「靜悄悄。。。夢正好，歡樂日子將臨到」。

願主祝福我們可從繁忙的生活節奏中安靜下來，在靜默中警醒禱告，以踏上「將臨節到聖誕節」，在盼望、平安、喜樂和仁愛中面見基督！

*李志敏*

