



Catholic Diocese of Victoria

Office of the Bishop

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Dear People of God,

Christmas is the feast in which God offers a response and remedy to the fears and anxieties of every age, including our own. It is the feast of hope in the darkness, when the ancient promise is fulfilled once again: *“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.”* (Isa 9:2)

How great the darkness can feel today. Our streets and buildings glow with dazzling lights—even our places of worship are adorned with a brightness meant to lift the spirit. Yet so often these lights are only passing distractions, brief attempts to soothe the heart and mind amid the turmoil of fear. We know there are reasonable, practical responses to the darkness of our time, but human solutions alone rarely reach the deeper places of vulnerability and fragility in our earthly journey. One wonders: would the Magi themselves have been able to find and follow the star if its gentle glow were competing with the flashes of bombs or the glare of spotlights?

And yet, Christmas comes. It returns each year with the still, small light of a star and the quiet voice of our God. In the warm glow of a humble stable, we hear again the divine message: “I love you.” “I am with you.”

Perhaps this Christmas is an invitation to seek something more than temporary relief from fear and anguish; an invitation not to distraction, but to encounter. For in the single greatest gift God gives us—His Son, Jesus—we receive a peace “not as the world gives,” and the tender assurance that God listens with the attentive heart of a newborn child.

Jesus’ birth is that still, small light of truth and life, revealing the Way of peace and justice through the seeming weakness of infancy and the homelessness of a young couple giving birth to their firstborn child and laying him in a manger—a humble place where “we came to know him in the smallness of a child laid in a manger.” (*Dilexi te*, (2025), 16) In Him, God shows us the path of listening with open hearts and of good will toward all, with “the preferential choice for the poor [that] is a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society, if we can only set ourselves free of our self-centeredness and open our ears to their cry.” (*Dilexi te*, (2025), 7)

Come let us adore Him.

Come let us listen to the poor and humble Jesus.

Come let us listen to the Creator’s plan for peace.

My prayer for you and your families this Christmas is that the light of Christ will calm your fears, renew your hope, and guide your steps as we journey together in faith.

Christmas blessings, and the peace of Christ be with you in the New Year.

Most Reverend Gary Gordon
Bishop of Victoria