



Greetings, people of the Diocese of New Westminster

What to say? This is a Christmas like no other.

Few of us who worked on live streaming or recording Holy Week and Easter services this year thought we would be doing the same thing for Advent and Christmas. But here we are.

And, of course, because Christmas comes at the end of the calendar year, while we're anticipating and preparing for Christmas, we're also looking back over our shoulder at this calendar year, trying to come to terms with it all as we take a deep breath and turn toward 2021.

At a time like this, it helps me to remember that our new year in the Church has already begun. It began on the first Sunday in Advent when we lit the first candle on the Advent wreath and began the countdown to the birth of Jesus. It began not with a noisy celebration but with a time of preparation and hopeful watchfulness for the arrival of a great mystery.

And that great mystery is this: God has come to us in our very flesh, God has chosen to live under the very conditions, bad and good, that we have lived and are living under.

And so we start our new year in the Church not denying what we and others have been through. We start our new year bringing all those things, the good and the bad of them, before the Holy Child, the one whose presence tells us that we are not alone and that we have never been alone. In Christ, God has visited God's people. In Christ God is with us.

Eric and I wish you and those you love a blessed Christmas. May it be a time when you experience God's peace and joy.

In Christ,
+ Melissa