



COMING HOME TO

Christmas

At this time of year, I have quite evocative memories of my years in Auckland where I would drive around the city and the pōhutukawas would be blooming brilliantly, the summer breeze through my window, listening to Christmas songs on the radio. One that is synonymous with this season is, "Driving Home for Christmas". There is that dynamic for many about 'going home' at this time of year. Being with family. Back to familiar places of our childhood perhaps. Feeling 'at home' with our family and friends.

And in our Church life, as the season of Advent unfolds into Christmas, again there is a sense of the familiar, the sense of home as we hear once more the familiar stories of long ago. "This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered". Going home. "And the word became flesh and lived among us..." God at home with us. "And Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart". The family that was home to Jesus as a child.

Christmas is a time for us to 'come home' to the One who gives us life. To reflect once more on the wonder of the incarnation, the light of the world, the one who made his home with humanity and through doing so, drew us into closer connection with the divine. A time to celebrate 'being at home' with the one who gives us love, life, purpose, direction and hope. A time of renewal. A time of gratitude.

At this time, we are also very aware that there are many who have no physical or spiritual home to go to. Those who are not welcome at home, where there is 'no room in the inn'. Those who search in the darkness for life and light. We hold them in our prayers and also seek practical ways in which we can help.

I wish you all a blessed Christmas with family and friends, a sense of 'being home' with God, and the knowledge and assurance that God goes before us, leading us into the New Year that lies ahead.

Thank you for your support and encouragement throughout the year. I appreciate it very much.

Holy God,

as we celebrate the Incarnation, help us to know in a deep way that we find our home in you. Thank you for the gift of the Christ child, the light of the world, for the ongoing work of your Holy Spirit, for the promise of life in all of its fullness. All praise to you O God. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen

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