



*Wishing
you peace & joy
this Advent & Christmas*

Sonia

*The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it - John 1:5*

Dear Beloved in Christ,

Advent Letter 2025

As I write this, Hurricane Melissa, a category 5 storm, has just torn through the island of Jamaica, where my parents were born. The devastation is overwhelming but so is the spirit of the Jamaican people. Hurricane Melissa will not have the final word.

It feels, in many ways, that a spiritual hurricane is raging through our world. There are wars, there is xenophobia, there are the effects of Climate Change, there is the widening of the gap between rich and poor; the haves and the havenots. By the time you read this, Melissa will hardly make the headlines but its effects will be felt by the Caribbean for decades to come. What of this spiritual hurricane which has people building walls instead of bridges? How do we overcome the distrust wreaking havoc in our world?

This world is the same one that God sent Jesus to. The walls between peoples seemed just as impenetrable in first century Palestine. There were wars, there was the fear of the 'stranger', there were the rich and the poor living side by side. The problems we face are the same as the problems facing our world then. And the solution is still the same - love. The Bible reminds us: ***"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life."*** [John 3: 16] God so loved the world, God so loved the world...

As the Jamaican people, like others in the Caribbean, try to piece together their lives, they know that it is only by sticking together that it will be possible. Only by remembering the humanity that they share. Only by holding on to the principle of love. Of course, there will be those people who will use the disaster to loot and commit criminal acts but there will also be those seeking to bring something of God's love into the situation.

Advent reminds us that neither we or this world is God-forsaken. Amid the broken shards of society and the shattered lives in our communities, the light of Christ continues to shine because we, the people of God, are present. Each one of us represents a flicker. We may feel that our light is not particularly strong but for the person in whom hope is almost gone, we can be for them, the noonday sun at its brightest. We can remind them that they have not been forsaken. ***"For God so loved the world..."***

*...but his angels here are human,
Not the shining hosts above;
For the drum-beats of his army
are the heart-beats of our love. StF 188 v. 3*

I pray that Advent's light may be with you and in you. May God's love in each of us continue to bring hope at such a time as this.

In Christian love,

