

Kia ora tatou,

*At many moments in the past and by many means,
God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets,
but in our time he has spoken to us in the person of his Son.
He is the reflection of God's glory and bears the impress of God's own being,
and sustains all things.*

Hebrews 1:1-4

The birth of Jesus changed the world. God became one of us. And we moved into the new time of AD: Anno Domini, years of the Lord.

There never has been and never will be an occurrence so filled with mystery. Little wonder the simplicity yet profundity of Christmas engages all our senses and emotions. Wonder, awe and bewilderment give rise to gratitude, gentleness, and compassion, and our hearts and minds are renewed.

The vulnerability of the manger rests in stark contrast to powerful yet jealous King Herod and his henchmen. Following Christ, we make our journey of life guided by the true light, the Prince of Peace, who dispels the lure of false lights and the dark temptations of greed and selfishness.

Let us rejoice at the gift of faith. Let us give thanks for our own tupuna who have guided us in the way of faith and let us embrace anew our life of light: in the words addressed to you at your baptism, "you have been enlightened by Christ ... walk always as a child of the light ... keep the flame of faith alive in your heart...".

God bless you and your whānau this Christmas, including the sick or troubled wherever they may be.

Thank you for what each one of you does to make our Diocese a family of faith.

+ Charles

Bishop Charles.