

GOOD NEWS

CARING AT CHRISTMAS

There is still a wave of goodwill at Christmas, of caring about those whose lives are difficult due to poverty, isolation, broken relationships.

People are singing carols, packing up gifts for chaplains to give to seafarers, stocking up foodbanks, donating to good causes and generally sharing a message of goodwill, even if we say "festive greetings" instead of "a blessed and holy Christmas".

Families are able to enjoy a wide range of Christmas activities which don't cost money, such as our Falmouth Festive Weekend. Even I was taken in by what seemed to be real snow but was in fact one of several snowmaking machines blowing out snow in the main shopping street.

COP 28

On its first day decided to take real action for peoples and nations who have been disastrously affected by climate change and raise monies for a loss and damage scheme, and initiating new ways to adapt changing situations.

THE MEXICAN PRESIDENT'S PLEDGE FULFILLED

Mexico's minimum wage will rise 20% on January 1st. This will take minimum Wages up to £11.40 a day, says the president, "this is historic because it means we will fulfil what we pledged to do at the start of our government, which is to double the minimum wage in real terms. This follows agreement between government and the business and labour sectors.

FOR REFLECTION AND PRAYER

PAKISTAN: DEPORTATION OF AFGHANS

A petition has been brought to Pakistan's Supreme Court by rights activists seeking to halt deportation of Afghan refugees, as authorities are combing refugee settlements in an effort to find and send home thousands. More than 370,000 Afghans have fled Pakistan since October 1st. Pakistan vowed to expel a million undocumented refugees. Thousands of Afghans have gone underground fearing for their lives if they return to Taliban ruled Afghanistan.

COP 28

It is reported that OPEC (the oil producing countries) may not attend the talks re the phasing out of fossil fuels.

FOOD COSTS

Research at 3 universities, Bournemouth, Exeter and Sheffield indicates that the average household now spends £605 more on food than two years ago. The report commissioned by the Energy and Climate Change Intelligence Unit found that since the start of 2022, £361 of the increased food cost is attributable to climate change and £244 to oil and gas costs.

RWANDA

The government's latest amendment of draconian immigration laws may still fail to be approved by the supreme court.

WAR AND CONFLICT

Our prayers and petitions for Peace continue.

With a forecast of a failed civilisation and half the population of Gaza starving, what are we called to do?? In this time of Advent as we wait for the Lord's coming, we continue to lift our hearts and minds up to our God in a seemingly impossible situation. May he heed our cries and the cries of so many injured, bereaved, and traumatised and hungry.

In France especially and in our country also there is a rise of antisemitism and of anti-Muslim feeling. Let us be a people of peace not of extremism.

There will be no celebrations in Bethlehem this year except the religious services.

YET AS CHRISTIANS WE ARE PEOPLE OF HOPE AND PEACE. May we remember that in our conversations.

Mary Bradley



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