Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

December 25th, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

"The people who dwelt in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." (Matthew 4:16 NRSV)

As we stand on the threshold of the Jubilee of Hope, we acknowledge the sufferings caused by sin in the world, while holding fast to the healing made possible by the work of God's grace. God breaks into our broken world by taking on our human flesh in the womb of Mary, a birth that opened the hearts of the shepherds to receive the angel's message, stirred the hearts of the magi to travel from afar and moved sinners to repentance.

We, too, gathered in churches around our diocese, are invited to open our hearts to the birth of our Saviour, the Dawn of Hope, welcoming the Prince of Peace who brings joy to lives transformed by his love. Darkness melts before him, as we bask in the love he reveals through human weakness, and learn to love as he has loved us from the beginning.

The trials he endured could not quench his love, nor his sufferings his mercy. His manger bed, harbinger of the cross he bore. The shepherd, a reflection of those who would follow him.

Born in human weakness, Christ is hope for a pilgrim people. Journeying through a foreign land, binding the wounds of one another, we commend ourselves to live not for ourselves but for him alone. Christ is our hope, his cross our anchor, his gospel the truth by which we live. During this Jubilee, and by his birth, may he be your strength, your hope your all. Together may we witness to our salvation.

"Come, Lord Jesus, come." (Revelation 22:20 NRSV)

Fraternally in Christ,

+ Bart van Roijen

Bishop Bart van Roijen

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