



ANGLICAN MEDIA
DIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN

LEVEL 4
221 LONDON CIRCUIT
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

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BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2014

What is Christmas all about?

In the shadow of atrocious violence Christmas is a confused celebration in 2014. We have been taken aback by the horrific experience of those trapped within the Lindt Café even while the sign in its window wished passers-by a Merry Christmas. How can it possibly be cheerful or joyful? If you had to write a brief one sentence definition of what Christmas is about, what would you now write? My definition would be *in love God became poor to make us rich*.

Christmas is about God lovingly becoming a vulnerable human being for us. He laid aside his glory and his natural immunity to pain, sickness, sorrow and death. He was born in a borrowed stable and laid in a borrowed feed trough. He was an asylum seeker who sought refuge in another country because his birth posed a threat to national security. He never owned any real estate and as he was dying his last possessions were raffled. He died as a common criminal, was buried in a borrowed grave, but in his dying he willingly absorbed the sins of others. *In love God became thoroughly poor*.

Richness in our world is most often described in purely economic terms but God became poor to restore our debased humanity. In his coming he dealt with our past, transforms our present and guarantees our future. God became poor to make us rich in peace, pardon and forgiveness for all our shortcomings. God became poor to make us rich in inner resources to live lives in the present which are marked by love, goodness, justice and mercy. In a world where fear and pessimism about the future stalks the streets God became poor to make us rich in the hope of resurrection in a renewed heaven and earth marked by righteousness. *In love God became poor to make us indescribably rich*.

I wish you every blessing in this holy and joyful season. May the peace, power and hope of Christ be yours in abundance as we follow the God who became poor to make us rich.

+ Trevor Edwards

The Right Reverend Trevor Edwards
Vicar General

Bishop Stuart Robinson is currently on long-service leave until February 2015. To arrange an interview with Bishop Trevor please call The Revd Dr Wayne Brighton on 0407 408 333. A video of this message will be available on Friday 19 December.