

“Season's Greetings”

Dear Friends

I remember one Christmas, my Grandmother handing me a dysfunctional Zobo alarm clock with the suggestion that I might like to take it apart. This seemed a fun thing to do until my Dad quipped that ‘any fool can take things apart but it takes skill to put it back together’. In the end I wasn’t sure whether to humour my Gran or frustrate my Dad.



An early gift from my friend , David, is the book: *The Great Partnership: God, Science and the Search for Meaning* by Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, which is an ideal choice, given my restlessness to reconcile the fundamentals of faith with my dalliance in the Chemistry Lab. Indeed, being fascinated by the working of parts while keeping sight of the integrated whole and purpose is still a struggle. Even if I could take a clock apart and put it together, I would still need to know the meaning of time. Likewise, to understand the origins of life is quite different from understanding the meaning of life.

Earlier in the year while trying to settle on our corporate card for the Church, I discovered how difficult it is to find one with truly Christian words and imagery. I have since taken a quizzical look at Christmas Cards to determine whether the seasonal Gospel is really carried when we outsource the expression of our large heartedness to political etiquette. Can we afford to lose sight of the turning point of salvation history in the glitter of seasonal paraphernalia?

This brings me to the cards on the mantelpiece arranged like elements on the Periodic Table. Each reminds me about an aspect of Christmas or a distant friend. But together they reflect on the wealth of our connectedness, of the divine One who became flesh and dwelt among us, the One who brings colour and excitement to our lives, the One who brings the promise of spring during cold winter, the One who brings hope and the One who will establish peace.

Looking toward the New Year we have opportunity to bring together elements of cheer to people discouraged by ‘conflict through the ages’, with the hope of resolution in the One who has been our ‘desire for ages’. Thank you for being One instrument of peace.

We wish you unashamedly a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Victor.

