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13 January 2011

01.11

From the Bishop's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

As the Bishop I do not have the detailed organizational responsibilities for rosters of musicians, Bible readers, prayers, welcomers, flowers, etc. And yet I still have the wonderful joy of declaring God's love to us in the birth of the Baby of Bethlehem. I have mentioned elsewhere the pleasure that I receive from the Cathedral's [Nine Lessons and Carols Service](#). The midnight service at the Cathedral is always very spectacular as a candle is lit and all the members of the congregation have their candles lit from the one candle, which represents Jesus Christ the light coming into the world. The [WikiLeaks and Jesus Christ](#) article for the print media on Christmas day received positive comment and I incorporated the metaphor of WikiLeaks into my [Christmas Day sermon](#), noting the issue of revelation.

Speaking with Christian folk, it seems that the Christmas Eve family services have grown substantially over the last 5-10 years. It is a pity that the television crews are unavailable to attend these functions.

CARING FOR PRISONERS

On the Saturday prior to Christmas, the Freedom Centre Support Group held an informative breakfast concerning their provision of accommodation to prisoners upon their release. This is a very enthusiastic group and I commend their work. REVD ROSS DUNCAN, Chaplain to the Prison Service Tasmania spoke on the role of chaplaincy and also of three key areas of the reintegration process for prisoners: preparing for release, post release and prevention. In my experience it is most unusual to find an address of this calibre. [Please click here to find the link to read it.](#)

CMS SUMMERVIEW

I'm looking forward to Judy Calf giving the Bible Studies about King Saul in 1 Samuel and it will also be good to catch up with John Thew as he finalizes his time as Federal Secretary of CMS Australia. The four day conference at Port Sorell is a time of refreshment as we consider God's word and God's world.

UPCOMING PARISH VISITS

The year is well and truly underway with upcoming visit to the Parishes of Devonport, St. Clement's Kingston and Burnie in the next few weeks.

BISHOP STANTON

Congratulations to Bishop Mervyn Stanton on his 25th Anniversary of the Consecration as a Bishop in the Church of God on 21 December 2010.

CHURCH IN 2020: BRINGING CHRIST TO OUR CULTURE

The Annual EFAC Ministry Conference will be held at the Melbourne School of Theology in Wantirna, Victoria from 25-26 March. The Keynote Speakers will be Mark McCrindle, the director of McCrindle Research, and Steve Addison, author of *Movements that Change the World*. The Bible studies and worship will be led by Rev Michael Raiter, Principal of BCV. You can attend this conference by registering at: www.efac.org.au It will also give you a chance to experience the Bible College of Victoria's new life as the Melbourne School of Theology in their new premises at Wantirna. <http://mst.edu.au/>

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE VICTIMS OF OUR TERRIBLE FLOODS

All things look to you, O Lord,
to give them their food in due season:
look in mercy on your people,
and hear our prayer for those whose lives and
possessions have tragically been destroyed by floods.
In your mercy restore your creation and heal our land.
So guide and bless your people,
that we may enjoy the fruits of the earth
and give you thanks with grateful hearts,
through our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

From the "A Prayer Book for Australia" Boughton Books, Alexandria NSW, 1995, p.205.

If you would like to give a financial donation payments may be made as follows:

By cheque:

made out to "Archbishop's Emergency Relief Fund"
and sent to ANFIN, GPO BOX 421, BRISBANE, QLD 4001

Or, by Electronic Transfer:

Account Name: Archbishop's Emergency Relief Fund
Account BSB: 704-901
Account Number: 00014858

Follow these links to some recent blogs:

[Caring for prisoners](#)

[Elder abuse: a fraction reported](#)

[New Year! Eternity? Whatever.](#)

[New Year Reflection 4 Action](#)

[Annual Spiritual Check up.](#)

[Christmas Greeting in Art](#)

Shalom

+ **John** 😊

John Harrower
Bishop of Tasmania