



**Christmas Eve 2018**  
**Sermon for 11.30pm Eucharist at St Andrew's Parish Church Guernsey**  
**Reading: Gospel St John 1:1-14**  
**'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us'**  
**Given by Rev Juliette E C Robilliard**

Unlike the disruptive drone chaos at Gatwick Airport last week, technology, when it is used selflessly brings people together. For example, Skype on our computers, enables family and friends even if they live in Australia, to pop up on our screens: but once the connection is closed, their images fade. It's still a delight, therefore, at this time of year to receive handwritten Christmas cards enclosing newsy letters regaling us with anecdotes from the past year peppered with pictures of the various activities enjoyed by those we know and love.

The letters are read, placed on the mantelpiece and then taken down and re-read again to savour each description. Knowing our family and friends so well, we can imagine their tone of voice as though they are speaking the letter to us. We sense the smells, sights and sounds of the activities undertaken and can almost feel the objects described. There is nothing like the written word to draw people closer together giving comfort and joy or, advice and guidance, for the delight or benefit of the recipient.

Similarly, the sublime reading from John's Gospel, conveys a message that we can read and re-read. Far more than human words, the Gospel communicates the divinely inspired Word of God.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth."

This eternal message delivers durability and dependability beyond time and space. Or, as our Queen's says in her Christmas message

"It is never out of date and can be heeded by everyone."

But how? We were not present in Bethlehem when the Word became flesh nor witnessed Christ's ministry first-hand so, how can we grasp the significance of his coming to be flesh of our flesh; our pattern for living and our Saviour through his death, resurrection and ascension? How do we unwrap the message, so that we too can have a living relationship with God?

Unlike ubiquitous Amazon parcels, God does not come to us neatly packaged with standardized 'how to use' instructions. Rather, to discover God in his written word we need an extra sense beyond our normal sight, smell, sound, touch and taste used in daily living and communication: that sense is faith. To nurture faith so that it can

grow needs us to trust and depend on God. Many people associate dependence with vulnerability not grasping that in experiencing our same hardships, Jesus Christ knows best how to support our every need, if we ask for his help. Or, to quote Canon Michael Hore of St Joseph's Christmas message published in the Guernsey Press last week,

“Although Christ came among us weak and empty-handed, he brought us priceless and everlasting gifts.”

Because God cannot be boxed in, his light is accessible to all, touching hearts and minds differently, as is most beneficial for each of us, for he loves us all equally with overflowing grace, mercy and peace. John's Gospel reminds us, to all who receive him and believe in him he gives power to become children of God, not born of flesh and blood, nor created by human will-power but by the will and Word of God. In faith, we have come to worship the Christ-child: let us ponder in wonder his priceless invitation to us of sharing his life for our salvation.

May it be our prayer that Christ's light will shine out of our hearts and minds and inspire our words and deeds for the goodwill and salvation of all people.

Amen