



**St Andrew's Parish Church Guernsey**  
**Christmas Eve – Sermon for 9.00pm First Mass of Christmas 2020**  
**Bible Readings: Isaiah 52: 7-10 St John 1: 1-14**  
**Given by Rev Juliette E C Robilliard**

### **Packaging gifts**

'The Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth.' These words from St John's Gospel need unwrapping for our world today. Let's do that by recalling the Christmas presents we've received each Christmas since our early years. Most likely, all of us when we were tiny tots, were far more interested in the scrunchy wrapping paper than the contents. However, the older we grew we realised that the contents were vastly more important than the wrapping paper and we actually started to anticipate what we might receive! I still do!

### **Packaging life**

Once we hit our teens and adulthood how curious then that we began to see ourselves as parcels and started wrapping up our personalities to present ourselves in what we perceive to be a more attractive or important image. I don't know if you've seen the TV excerpts of the 'The Real Housewives of Jersey,' they certainly illustrate one form of presentation to the world: I won't hurry to audition for any Guernsey equivalent! Often the wrapping we put around ourselves fearing to present our true selves to the world, is out of vulnerability. Life can deliver sideswipes that knock our confidence to the extent that we can end up believing we are the parody of our true selves that we feel the world has portrayed of us.

### **Unwrapping a pattern for living**

Tonight, recalls the night when all that changed: our human condition is precisely why God sent his Son to live like one of us to give us a pattern for living. God did not remove the sticks and stones that break bones from his beloved Son's path nor did he deflect the hurtful names with which people denigrated him. Jesus lived as we live, yet he rose above it all both figuratively and physically when he rose from death on that third day. Jesus had no time for prejudicial thinking and left those with closed minds to pave their own way into powerlessness. Instead, he concentrated on empowering people by his love and compassion when they opened their hearts and minds to his message.

### **Unwrapping the Word of life**

What was the message of the 'Word that became flesh?' It was that God's Son did not come to judge the world but to help us peel back the wrappings with which life binds us and give us spiritual confidence to break free. Jesus knows how hard daily

living can be and is willing to help us to accept ourselves as we truly are irrespective of our frail emotional, physical or spiritual packaging. He seeks to transform us from our sinful fallibilities into the whole person that God created us to be. That's easy to say but we might question the truth of that ascertain for, if God's Son came to live like us then, surely, he relinquished his divinity? How then can our transformation take place? In coming to us, Christ bridged the divide between heaven and earth, so that our humanity could be raised up to take on the holiness of his divinity.

### **Believing in Christmas**

The love God bestowed on us at Christmas in his Son is evidence that we are precious in his sight. All that we need do to benefit from that love and to unwrap our gift of life in all its fulness, is to believe and to ask to receive God's grace and truth shown to us in the life of the Word made flesh who lived among us.

Amen.