



THE HOPE OF THE INSIGNIFICANT ONES

Unrest and violence demonstrate how difficult humanity finds it to come to terms with the grudges and bitterness of the past. The ordinary daily life of the insignificant person is filled with uncertainty and insecurity when the future is overshadowed by darkness. Planning one's own life becomes difficult, and the mind is constantly restless.

This was the kind of world into which Jesus was born. The first Christmas was celebrated unnoticed amidst the turmoil of major events. The Roman Empire was seeking to consolidate its position in the territories it had conquered, where resistance and bitterness were simmering. In both Galilee and Jerusalem you just had to try to bend to the command of those more powerful than you. It was the need to register for taxation that forced Mary and Joseph to take a long journey. The ordinary citizen wasn't asked about the kind of life they wanted, or how their dreams might come true.

God was born as a human being amidst a rough and brutal world. A little new-born child was to bring a hope to the world that we still celebrate this Christmas. The birth of Jesus announces important matters. God has not forgotten the world God created. God's hand is seen less in major events than it is in the midst of the joys and sorrows of the ordinary life of the insignificant person. The Almighty neither fears nor hesitates to make a commitment to those who are weak, insignificant or nothing. God loves those whom even people despise.

Christmas brings to our lives now a message of hope that remains alive even in the darkest times. Our Lord Jesus is born! God is with us!

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!" Luke 2:14

May you have a happy Christmas that is blessed by God!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tapio Luoma".

Tapio Luoma
Archbishop
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