

## **Advent Message 2018**

Which Advent Calendar are you going to open? The Lego one? The one full of Maltesers or other chocolate. Maybe a Fairtrade One. Hands up if you got a nativity one? Maybe parents and carers are looking for the ones with loads of different perfumes. I have even seen one with different nuts and bolts for DIY dad. I wonder if there is one for "I'm a Celebrity" with bush tucker trials behind each door...

Whatever the Advent Calendar you have - and you can open the first doors this coming weekend- and all the way through to Christmas Eve, it is all about looking forward.

Christians use a couple of times a year to think about things. In particular, we think, when will Jesus come back? How will we react? We pray that he will and he said that he will but it seems an awfully long time to wait. Rather like the long haul to Christmas.

The anticipation, the eagerness. The watching, the waiting. Yes - you can say all those things as you think about what Christmas Presents you could get on Christmas Day. BUT as Christians we are really looking for the real Christmas Presence - in our lives, in our hearts, how we live out the values we choose to and learn about in school - each and every day.

So, in this short four weeks, don't get stressed out with all you need to do - Christmas comes every year, get over it! Make time to think and pray for your family, our communities and our friends. Those with plenty and those with plenty of nothing. Whilst shopping for those Cyber Monday and Black Friday offers, buy something for the Foodbank. Write a Christmas Card to someone you want to make up with. Think about times when - yes, "I could have done that better". Then look forward, and know you can.

***Reverend Gary Crellin***