

PRESIDENT'S LETTER DECEMBER 2016/JANUARY 2017

COME JOURNEY WITH ME

Dear Sisters

I am starting this month's letter with some good news – we have a vice-president! Sr Audrey Kendall of our Harlesden Circle and congregation was nominated and elected in November. We now have a full complement of executive members. Congratulations to Audrey, I hope she will be able to write in February to introduce herself to you all.

Christmas is approaching fast as I write this letter. I love Christmas and always have done. I love to collect books about Christmas – books which retell the Christmas story as well as books which tell a story with a Christmas theme.

Each year the Poet Laureate – Carol Ann Duffy – writes a poem with a Christmas theme and it is published as a small illustrated book. One of my favourites is the poem she wrote which retells the story of the British and German soldiers in the First World War, who, on Christmas Day sang carols and played football together. It is an amazing story, a miracle really that men who were supposed to be enemies could find some common ground in the singing of songs celebrating the birth of the Prince of Peace. It is a reminder to us that the arrival of Christ in this world was not and is not a one-off historical event but an event which can and does transform ordinary men and women and their lives.

Another one of my Christmas books is a book for children published last year in aid of War Child. It is called Refuge and is a retelling of Jesus' birth and journey to Egypt. It is a reminder that Jesus' early life was spent as a refugee – fleeing for his life. It is also a reminder that Jesus and his family were welcomed and given refuge both in Bethlehem and in Egypt.

As we approach Christmas and the New Year, war still wages on in Syria and Iraq. People still flee for their lives and some find a welcome.

It is right that we celebrate with joy the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into this world and I wish you all a joyful Christmas and a happy new year. It is however, also right that we remember those whose lives are shattered and do what we can to make the Christmas story a reality for all.

Yours in Christ

Sr Janet Cooper