



WE WISH  
YOU A MERRY  
CHRISTMAS



FROM  
TONY'S  
HEART  
TO  
YOURS

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

**Won't you guide my sleigh (life) tonight!**

In the world of make believe the theme of a well known Christmas song depicts a picture of a night that was closing in with a deep fog, visibility was very low and a very important journey was in jeopardy. The hero of the song was a reindeer with a nasal abnormality that had been made fun of for much of his/her life. Then Santa said, “Rudolph won't you guide my sleigh tonight!” A “savior” was revealed. A few days ago I read again this small article that I had kept for years. It said:

*According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid -December. Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be female, we should have known. Only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost!*

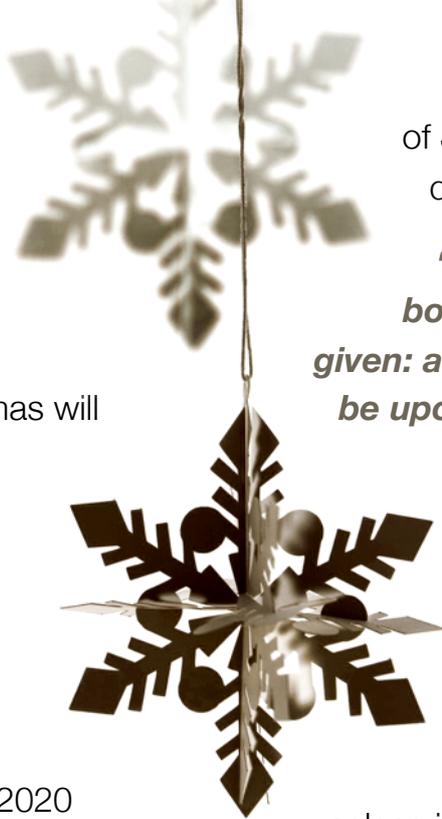
I had a laugh but then thought there is something more in this.

While the main concern of many children this season is whether or not Father Christmas will find them, the concern of many adults, is whether or not they can find a clear path through all the sadness of this year. Here in the USA where I live, we are currently losing a life every 30-45 seconds to COVID! Globally 2020 has affected so many with so much. Losing loved ones, jobs, health and houses.

The Father of the Christ of Christmas said in Proverbs 3: 5&6 (The Passion translation)

***Trust in the Lord completely and do not rely on your own opinions. With all your heart rely on Him to guide you, and He will lead you in every decision you make. Become intimate with him in whatever you do and He will lead you wherever you go.***

We all need a guide to help us find our way. This Christmas take time to think of what this season is all about. Two thousand years ago humanity had lost its way and a loving father was broken hearted by the decisions of those he had created. Their decisions had led them away from his fatherhood. To rectify this He sent his only son to earth to be born, to live, to die that they could be forgiven and reconciled with him. In Isaiah chapter 9 :6, my favorite scripture prophesying the birth



of Jesus, declared five qualities of his life. It states:

***“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”***

While many will try to find solace in the make-believe we can have the confidence that in the darkest time of humanity a Savior was born who lives today and provides wonder, counsel, might, everlasting fatherhood and peace. While the song has Santa saying “wont you guide my sleigh tonight”, Jesus, the Christ Child of Christmas, lives today to be your constant guide for life. He did not remain in a manger or a tomb!

Many of you will understandably have questions about your tomorrows i.e. what will the church look like post COVID, how will our finances be affected, what will happen to national economies, are vaccines safe, etc.? I know these discussions are taking place in cluster life, but enough to say here, our certainty is in the words of Isa 30:21 ***“And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, this is the way, walk in it.”*** This good news has become our northern star as we navigate life, so celebrate the true meaning of Christmas and acknowledge Him, allowing Him to direct your paths into a

brighter 2021. Remember the word encourages us, if we lack wisdom, ask. None of this has caught Father by surprise!

Marilyn and I on behalf of the Apostolic Council thank you for giving yourself to growing the influence of the kingdom of heaven on earth as you have served the purposes of God in your communities, families and friends during this difficult year. We have been so blessed and moved by the many testimonies. We believe with you for a season of refreshing over this Christmas season and a hope to continue to rise within from the knowledge that in this unusual time "He will guide your sleigh (life) tonight and every day and night to come. We are blessed to know that our Father is working everything together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

Joy to the world is one of my favorite Christmas carols and will conclude with the words of the fourth verse.

*He rules the world!  
With truth and grace,  
And makes the Nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love  
And wonders of His love  
And wonders, wonders of His love.*



You are loved, appreciated and honored.

*Tony*



**TONY & MARILYN  
FITZGERALD**

For any comments, suggestions and news,  
please do not hesitate to contact  
the COTN Virtual Resource Centre at [communication@cotn.org](mailto:communication@cotn.org)

**W W W . C O T N . O R G**

