

We enter the New Year with preoccupations of many kinds. Some of these have to do with our families and friends. We share also the preoccupations of society. Though these are external to us they impinge upon our consciousness and have to do with war in Iraq and Afghanistan; with the consequences of global warming; the effects of the recession and its impact upon our lives and the lives of our fellow citizens in terms of work, mortgages and general standard of living. There is also an undercurrent of political unrest.

Into all of this the Church has voiced its call: "prepare the way of the Lord; make straight His paths". What does this mean? Does it mean that we should address each of these, our preoccupations and those of our society; does the call go somewhere deeper, into our consciences and touch the fibres of our faith, our hope and our love? I believe so, because it is only when we are settled in ourselves and know through faith how we relate to one another, to our society, to our world and to God its Creator and our Redeemer that we shall find the answers to the questions which trouble us, and call on the strengths by which we can address them.

It is not in human wisdom and in human strength that we place our trust, but in the wisdom that comes from above, the wisdom of the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ.

If proclaiming the Gospel in today's world is living the Gospel in it, then our living must imitate it. The answer to so many of today's problems is in simplicity of life, in forbearance, and in a child-like trust manifested in prayer.