



**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO ALL AT THE EOT
AND OUR GUESTS AT THE EOT's LUNCH ON
FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER 2019**

By Ms. LEELA RAMDEEN, LAY ASSESSOR

“Friends, it is such a joy to be able to gather together as the EOT community, with our invited guests, to celebrate this important season in the Christian calendar – Christmas. We live in a multi-cultural, multi-faith society. It is fair to say that over the years we have learned to respect each other’s religion.

For Christians, Christmas is a time when we celebrate the day when Christ was born; it is a time when we also look forward to the future when He will come again in glory, and thirdly, we consider how He lives among us in the present.

Pope Francis asks us to discern what the Christ-child has to tell us. He said: “What is the universal message of Christmas? It is that God is a good Father and we are all brothers and sisters. This truth is the basis of the Christian vision of humanity.” I dare say that it is the basis of most, if not all religions. We all share a common humanity.

Amidst the tinsel, glitter, parang, carols, parties, pastelle, sorrel and ginger beer, spare a thought for those in need. We live in a time of selfishness, greed and individualism. Let's swim against the tide; open our hearts and demonstrate what it means to be a citizen of this blessed country/world. Reach out to those on the margins; the poor, the homeless, the differently abled, the shut-ins, the lonely, the disaffected, the migrants and refugees, the victims of crime, as well as the perpetrators and their families. There are creches like ours everywhere we go in TT. How often do we stop to reflect on the scene before us; truly reflect. In a lowly stable Jesus Christ; love incarnate was born.

Pope Francis tells us that in this Child, “God invites us to be messengers of hope. He invites us to become sentinels for all those bowed down by the despair born of encountering so many closed doors. In this Child, God makes us agents of his hospitality.” He asks us to shake off our indifference and see Jesus “in all those who arrive in our cities, in our histories, in our lives...May the Holy Child, the King of Peace, allow a new dawn of fraternity to rise over the entire (world)...May all of us receive peace and consolation from the birth of the Saviour and,

in the knowledge that we are loved by (our) heavenly Father, realise anew that we are brothers and sisters and come to live as such!"

We each have a Christmas wish. My wish is for love and peace to reign in our hearts, our communities, and in our world. May the Christ-child continue to inspire our Chair/Judge so that she will be able to take this noble institution from strength to strength. I wish you all a happy and holy Christmas."

Ms. Leela Ramdeen.