

Rector's Letter December 2023

What can I give him....?

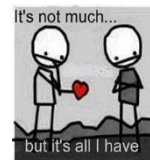
One question I guess we all struggle with at this time of year is “what can I give him / her”. Sometimes the problem is that we simply can't think of anything—my dad was like that before he retired, because he had bought most things he wanted and he didn't have enough time to read many books or pursue many hobbies. Sometimes the problem is that we simply don't have the money. It is a sad fact that Christmas can produce terrible problems for some families because they end up in debt at vicious interest rates—television and magazines can create the lie that Christmas isn't Christmas unless you spend spend spend.

However, in the first Christmas, Mary and Joseph did not even have a proper home or baby basket—Jesus was placed in an animal feeding trough, but there was nothing wrong with Mary and Joseph's love.



One of my favourite carols contains the wonderful final verse:

*What can I give him, poor as I am,
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb,
If I were a wise man, I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give him, give my heart.*



When my dad was so difficult to buy presents for, I don't think he would have minded if we had got him nothing, as long as we were there. What he loved most about Christmas was a chance to stop work and be with his family. We often played cards or board games together. We didn't need new ones because we liked games from previous years.

One Christmas Carol that often tops the polls as “favourite” is:

Silent night, Holy Night
All is calm, all is bright.



I wonder whether this is such a favourite because most of us long for that special peace at Christmas—what we long for can't be wrapped in a box.

I hope our services will help all who come to celebrate and contemplate God's most wonderful gift to us—it doesn't come wrapped in a box, he comes in person

We hope and pray that you have a wonderful, peaceful and joyful Christmas, and that God will bless us all in the years ahead;

with love,

Peter