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## From +John...

Dear Friends

There are only two words for me to use in this last newsletter of 2017. They are, *Thank you!* However it will take me more than two words to say a sincere thanks to so many of you.

Throughout the year we have been working on topics to firmly establish *Stewardship* in the Archdiocese. This has involved a number of very well attended *Stewardship Days* and wonderful participation by many. On these days I have reminded all participants of these words:

- *Gratitude* - we receive the gift of God (and everything is God's gift) with *gratitude*.
- *Responsibility* - we cultivate the gifts of God with *responsibility*.
- *Generosity* we share these gifts with others and share them *generously*.
- *Return*— we *return* the gifts with increase to God.

We have had our Archdiocesan Synod with the theme of “Go, you are sent”. The opportunity to participate in the Synod process in the months preceding the Synod weekend was taken up by hundreds, if not thousands of people. The prayerful engagement in the Synod process led to a weekend of listening and dialogue, which in turn led to 96 proposals being presented to me. This has already given a new sense of purpose – *Mission* – to the diocese and the desire to go to the peripheries, to accompany and support those who are struggling in life.

Pope Francis prayer for our Synod was that “the Synod will encourage all the faithful to face the opportunities and challenges of the present moment through a renewed encounter with Christ and the saving message of the Gospel.” I believe his prayer for us continues as we prepare for the Christmas season “when the kindness and love of God our Saviours for humankind were revealed .....” (Titus 3 4-7).

This has been a very busy year, a very full year, and it is all because of “the kindness and love of God” gifted to us in the birth of Jesus.

This Christmas my prayer for all who read this newsletter is that,

- we all receive Jesus, the Gift of God, with *gratitude* in our lives;
- we look for ways to use with *responsibility* the gift of Jesus in our lives;
- we share Jesus *generously* with others, share his love, share his words, share his presence;
- we realize that all is gift, and in *return* all gifts to God in love.

I pray too that as we prepare for Christmas we will all live it in such a way that it is a renewed encounter with Christ and with the saving message of His Gospel

With prayers and sincere thanks to you all for your wonderful support throughout this year.

Every blessing and Happy Christmas

+ John



### LET YOUR GOD LOVE YOU

Edwina Gateley

Be silent.  
Be still.  
Alone.  
Empty.  
Before your God  
Say nothing.  
Ask nothing.  
Be silent.  
Be still.  
Let your God look upon you.  
That is all.  
God knows.  
God understands.  
God loves you with  
An enormous love,  
And only wants  
To look upon you  
With that love.  
Quiet.  
Still.  
Be.

Let your God –  
Love you.

*Wishing all readers a happy and holy Christmas.  
If you are travelling, stay safe on the roads.  
We look forward to hearing from you in 2018.  
From the Staff of the Office of the Archbishop*

**Love not in word but in deed**