**A Christmas Card to You from Archdeacon Bill**

**“A Child Shows Us How to Love Jesus”**

Christmas is best seen through a child’s eyes. They radiate the wonder, joy, and excitement that the promise of this season holds for us. They often lead the way in demonstrating how we show our love for Jesus.

Did you know that the sparkling, coloured balls we hang on our Christmas Trees are symbols of love for Jesus? Well, there is a lovely “Legend” about “The Little Juggler” which you and your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, nieces and nephews may enjoy.

The Little Boy stood across the road, watching person after person come around the corner and went in to see the baby Jesus. He noticed that each person who went in was carrying a gift. The little Boy decided that all those who went in to see the Christ child were showing their love for Him through their adoration and gift. The Little Boy felt sad. He wanted to go inside and kneel before the tiny Babe, say his prayer, and leave a gift. He even imagined how the Baby would smile at him when he laid his present beside the crib. But the little Boy had nothing to take.

All of a sudden, the Little Boy’s hand touched his favorite playthings in his pocket: three round sparkling balls which were very precious to him. He loved to toss them in the air and catch them again. “I’ll go in and juggle for the Baby,” he thought excitedly. He skipped across the road and into the dimly lit room. As soon as his eyes were used to the darkness, he politely pushed his way through the people until he stood beside the Baby’s crib. Then he began to juggle the brightly coloured balls. They seemed to sparkle mysteriously in the dim room. He knew that he had never juggled so well before. The baby Jesus smiled! All the people stood back to watch and clap. They had never seen a little boy juggle quite so well. And they remembered it for a long time-they even told their grandchildren about it !

The little boy whispered to the mother, Mary, “I wanted to bring him a gift and please him, too, but I didn’t have anything to give. “Your juggling is a gift of love, “the mother whispered back. “The best gifts are the gifts of our hands.”.

And that is why we hang shiny, sparkling, coloured balls on our Christmas tree every year. Why not take time in this busy season to tell this story to your children, grandchildren, etc., especially when they help in the annual decorating of the family Christmas tree. Perhaps you could provide some special coloured balls for hanging.

Children show us how to love Jesus. But children aren’t always easy and can be quite difficult. Recently our granddaughter Audrey engaged in one of her many temper tantrums when she was deprived of a toy, she wanted to take home with her from day care. She threw a fit and would not co-operate with being placed in her car seat, scream crying the whole time and thrashing about. Sometime later, after settling and playing contentedly at home, she got up unexpectedly and without cause stood before her mother taking both her mother’s arms in her hands. She looked her mother squarely in the eye and declared, “I am so sorry Mommy.” “Whatever for?” her mother inquired, caught off-guard. “For the car”, she said with a three-year-old vocabulary. And they hugged in a way that expressed that absolution had been sought and realized. If a child can show so us how to love then surely we as adults can learn the way to express our love to Jesus.

May you find your way of how to love Jesus by realizing the blessings found in the Nativity of our Lord when He was yet a child.

**Merry Christmas,**

**Archdeacon Bill and Ruth Gray and family.**

(This story is based on “Sparkling Balls of Love” written by Patti Carlisle in her booklet “Living Christian Traditions” which first appeared as a series of articles in her column “For Children’s Sake” in the Huron Church News, Anglican Diocese of Huron, London, Ontario. 1990-1991.)