

Words to live by, whatever the season

No season is harder to say goodbye to than the Christmas season. By now, most of the lights of Christmas will be gone. Too often in the past, as the lights have come down, my spirit has come down as well. Don't we all suffer a bit from seasonal depression?

One antidote for the blues is gratitude. So first, I want to express my gratitude to all of those who decorated our spirits during the holidays. As always there was 34th St. in Hampden and "the house on Gittings Avenue." There were countless other displays as well. Whether you lit the block or a single candle in a window, accept my thanks. In the midst of darkness you were light. You remind us that that is the call of all Christians - to be light in the darkness. We remember from John's Gospel that light came into the darkness and the darkness did not overwhelm it.

In addition to gratitude, laughter and joy also help, so I thought I would share some quotes - some lovely, some light-hearted and some profound - that came to me from various sources. Perhaps, in my own humble way, I'm trying to prolong the Christmas season. More practically, I'm sharing these thoughts now because, well, by next Christmas, I probably will have lost this list. I have a creative mind, just not an organized mind.

"People are so worried about what they eat between Christmas and New Year, but they should be worried about what they eat between New Year and Christmas!"

"Blest is the season that engages the world in a conspiracy of love!"

"Christmas is in my heart 12 months a year, and, thanks to my credit cards, it's on my bank statement 12 months a year as well."

"There are no strangers on Christmas Eve!"

"Once again we come to the Holiday Season, a deeply religious time that each of us observes in his or her own way, by going to the mall of his or her choice!"

“Remember, if Christmas is not found in your heart, you won’t find it under a tree.”

“Anyone who believes that men are the equal of women has never seen a man trying to wrap a Christmas present.”

“Giving yourself is the best gift of Christmas!”

“Why does Scrooge love Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer? Because every buck is dear to him.”

“Christmas is the one day of the year that reminds us that we’re here for something else besides ourselves.”

“What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus? Claustrophobic!”

“Can I get a picture of you so I can show Santa what I want for Christmas?”

“The four stages of Christmas: First stage, you believe in Santa Claus. Second stage, you don’t believe in Santa Claus. Third stage, you are Santa Claus. Fourth stage, you look like Santa Claus!”

“Guardian angel, pure and bright,

please lead Santa here tonight.”

“Santa Claws never forgets the cat.”

“The message of Christmas is that the material, visible world is bound to the invisible, spiritual world.”

“Christmas is the time of year when you realize how many people you know and how many sizes you don’t.”

“Oh, for the good old days when people would stop Christmas shopping when they ran out of money.”

“Christmas is a time when everyone wants his past forgotten and his present remembered.”

“Giving yourself is the best gift!”

And, perhaps my favorite: “Love is what’s in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen.”

The quieter the mind, the happier we are.