

# Christmas message

I love Christmas. I like the turkey and the pudding, the tinsel and the trees, the carols and the stories, the pleasure of giving and receiving. Best of all is the way many people feel they should be kinder at Christmas, thinking more of others, reaching out to the lonely and trying to bring argumentative families together.

Today there is a great need for the spirit of Christmas in our politics and in the social media exchanges. Things became very heated in the recent election, with lies and nastiness the stock in trade of too much discourse. I always seek to see good in people, and to ignore the everyday petty jibes from those who disagree with me. If I push back, complain or seek a remedy it shows just how far the nastiness has gone. Some of my supporters think me naïve in not running negative campaigns about named critics, and in not calling out every dirty trick or lie. I would like to suggest that going forward more of us recognise that there are many valid points of view. Often the best way to make your case is to say what is good about it, not to seek to run down those who do not yet agree.

The opportunity at Christmas could be to get on with family members we do not like, or to bury the quarrel with the neighbour. It is better to have more friends and fewer enemies. That is the true spirit of Christmas. It is often possible to find ways of working with people that do not think they like you, by showing them what we have in common rather than playing up the disagreements. I want the greater happiness and prosperity of my constituents. I understand the minorities who do not agree with my points of view on some subjects and I will work to represent them to government when they have legitimate worries or complaints. I would just like them to understand I wish them well and do what I do because I think it is in the best interests of our country and community.

I want to wish you all a very happy Christmas, as I seek your help in improving the tone of our democratic disagreements. I am looking forward to the joys of a traditional Christmas whilst I also think about how we can spread a bit more Christmas cheer to those in need.