**The Feast of Light 2021**

Greetings to all our friends in Faith and Light. As I write our great Universal Feast is approaching and I am conscious that we will not be able to meet physically this year anywhere in the world; perhaps for the first time in our history.

The gathering in our regions is something we look forward to each year around the Feast of Candlemas. It is special for us because as we meet we know we are connected to all Faith and Light communities around the world. We all gather to celebrate this gift that has been bestowed on us. Through that gift we have come to appreciate the unique beauty in every human person; that all God’s children have ‘a place in the choir’. That has become very real for us and it is natural that we would gather to celebrate.

Our meetings, our gatherings are special. It is that time each month when we are in community; when we gather as individuals and become other than ourselves. So we miss our gatherings during this time of lockdown and it has become very clear to us that we all crave interaction – that fundamental need to commune, to share, to laugh, to touch. Maybe touch in particular because touch gives us a sense of acceptance and belonging; of being beloved.

This year we are not able to gather and be close to each other in that way. But we can gather in prayer and some of us may be able to meet virtually and be in touch through the gift of the internet. For that gift too, we give thanks in these strange times. And even though we will not be together physically, the tendrils of our love will reach out and touch us.

We will remember. We will remember in a way that is more than memory. As we reflect on the beautiful story proclaimed on our feast day – the story of the Presentation of Jesus in the temple. And at the heart of the story the tender meeting of the family with Simeon and Anna. There is that moment in in the story where Simeon is able to hold the baby and proclaim what a blessing that was for him. And as he held the baby, he revealed the beauty, the wonder and the possibility in the little fragile child.

As we remember we know it is more than remembering, because the story is our story too. There is wonder, beauty and possibility in all of us. That is always proclaimed in our gatherings, sometimes in words, but more often by our presence to each other.

The seeds of possibility are always there. Some we are born with and some are yet to be planted. All are waiting to burst forth; pulsating with yet-to-be born dreams. Through our love we can stir them into life; we can coax the heart to choose seeds of promise, possibility and new life. ‘If I could wish for something / I would wish for neither wealth or power / but the passion for possibility’ (Kierkegaard).

Happy Feast. Donal Lucey