



ROCKLINC

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Merry Christmas - 2016

With 2016 slowly winding down it is a great time to reflect on the past year and to prepare for the year that stretches before us. Some of the more memorable events in 2016 included the summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, the expansion of the Zika virus that seemed unstoppable, before petering out, and the growing importance of the Internet, as it reaches into every area of life. Think about the impact of the Internet just in the area of mobile commerce! We all know about the growing importance of Amazon, Netflix, Facebook, Uber, Airbnb, OpenTable, Kayak and Google, along with a host of other web based businesses. Consider the exponential growth in financial services offered on your mobile device! And what about the Internet when it comes to the dissemination of information! It has turned “traditional media” on its head!

In reflecting on 2016, who can forget two of the most memorable elections in recent history? The first election was the “Brexit” referendum in June. The results of this election surprised all the pundits when the British people voted to leave the failing European Union. Time will tell whether the British Parliament honours the vote! Regardless, it sent shock waves through much of the global establishment. The self-proclaimed intelligentsia underestimated the wisdom of the average person, who is sick of bureaucrats, especially inept and corrupt bureaucrats from Brussels, determined to strip away their freedom and dignity! The second election of note was the US election. While both candidates were less than ideal, Americans wisely rejected the complete and utter corruption of the Clintons and the Democratic Party and opted for true “hope and change”. After eight years of Obama’s unrelenting government expansion, leading to the erosion of wealth for the heartland of America, along with a brutal assault on personal and religious freedoms, the people were fed up! Into this backdrop, Donald Trump singlehandedly ignited a fire under a large swath of Americans who turned out in record numbers to vote against the encrusted, complacent and arrogant Establishment. It will be exciting to follow events in the US as we head into 2017, and the inauguration of the new President.

What a contrast to the kleptocracy of the liberal party in Canada. In both Queen’s Park and Ottawa we have governments that are more interested in using their power to exploit their citizens, rather than to help them. This is evidenced most clearly in the repressive level of taxation, the return to unconscionable levels of fiscal deficits, the assault on the family unit, the collapsing standards of morality and education in our public schools and the unprecedented attack on personal and religious liberties in our country. Just refer to Bill 28 provincially, entitled “All Families are Equal” (this Bill never defines any family and only serves to attack and undermine the traditional family) and Bill 16 federally, (which attacks the binary nature of gender and succumbs to the non-scientific notion that gender is a mere social construction), just to get a flavour of the ongoing moral and social collapse all around us.



What keeps us positive despite these challenges? The message of Christmas and the good news of a Saviour! It is this message, the message that our current world despises and attacks at every turn that lifts our hearts and minds from the challenges and evil of this world and infuses them with a living Hope, rooted in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, it is the truth that God did not leave humanity to wallow in the “Slough of Despond” as John Bunyan pictured it in his seminal work, “The Pilgrim’s Progress”. Rather He sent His one and only Son into this world to deliver us from our sins and rescue us from the devastating effects of trying to live autonomously from our Creator, in the swamp of despair. Rather than be pulled down by all the challenges it is up to us, by God’s grace, to be the “salt and light” in the world and to bring real hope where there is desperation, unconditional love where there is hate, peace where there is violence, freedom where there is oppression, and life where there is death.

One of my favourite passages in the Bible is 1 Peter 2:24; ***“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.”*** This verse, along with the whole message of Christianity tells us that mankind matters to God. It tells us that Jesus Christ took to Himself humanity, so that He could act as a true substitute for mankind and bear our sins and die in our place that we might have His righteousness! This great exchange is at the centre of gospel of grace, displayed brilliantly and perfectly in Jesus Christ. It is this gospel that continues to change lives, transform cultures and lift millions of people out of spiritual darkness and into the light of life! Let us celebrate life this Christmas by celebrating the giver of life, protecting all human life and cherishing all we have as a gift from our gracious God.

To further this message, ROCKLINC has made a donation to the Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services, otherwise known as CAPSS (www.capss.com). This wonderful organization is committed to providing life-affirming options to women and men facing a pregnancy decision. A culture that will not protect its most vulnerable, and stand up for all human beings, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender and religious belief is a culture in serious decline and not one to be celebrated.





It has now become a tradition at ROCKLINC to express the Christmas message using a well-known and beloved Christmas hymn. This year we want to draw your attention to the beautiful hymn “**O Come, all ye Faithful**”. It is a rich hymn filled with wonderful truths concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

For many years this hymn was known as an anonymous Latin hymn. Recent research has found manuscripts indicating that an English layman, named John Wade, wrote the carol in 1744. The original music used by him is very similar to what we use today. The hymn first appeared in his collection, Cantus Diversi, published in England in 1751. One hundred years later an Anglican minister Frederick Oakeley, who used it for his congregation, translated the hymn into its present English form. The tune name, "Adeste Fideles," is taken from the first words of the original Latin text, and translated literally means "be present or near, ye faithful."

The original Latin text consisted of four stanzas. The **first stanza** draws our attention to the infant Jesus born in Bethlehem's stable. It points out that this is no ordinary baby rather this one is the King of angels, indicating His sovereignty over the angelic realm. The **second stanza**, which is often omitted in hymnals, reminds us of the essential Biblical truth that the Christ child is fully God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things. Note the lines carefully, this baby is “very God” and although joined now with human flesh this is the one that is from all eternity with no beginning since He is “begotten not created”! The **third stanza** pictures for us the exalted song of the angelic choir heard by the lowly shepherds as they announced the birth of the long awaited Saviour, Christ the Lord! The **final stanza** offers praise and adoration to the Word, an expression taken from the Gospel of John, emphasizing that this infant is fully God and discloses God to all mankind! The wonder of all is that the Creator God appears in history in human flesh! It is this historic event, coupled with the events of Easter that undergird and provide the only framework for explaining to us that all humankind is of unspeakable value. There is an enduring sanctity to all human life, because we are made in the image of the infinite and eternal God! Human rights and freedoms do not come from the State they come from God! If we want to improve the condition of this world and of ourselves let us begin by coming and adoring Him, Christ the Lord!

O Come, all ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant
Oh come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him
Born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him Christ the Lord.



God of God,
Light of Light
Lo, He abhors not the virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:
O come, let us adore him Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God
In the highest:
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from your investment team at ROCKLINC Investment Partners!