

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

16th December 2010

Two weeks before Christmas and we have had a flood. After thinking that it would never rain again, the water and storms are welcome.

Today we saw a new bird on the block; Fred checked the dam wall for flood damage (and yes, it is leaking... work to be done when the water course dries out); picked the strawberries; and talked with the skinks; said hello to the wombat hole (is the wombat there? we don't know) and marvelled yet again that it did rain. (again!) We lost the fence along the creek and are learning about insurance claims. Three inches of rain on sodden ground gave us the highest flood we have ever seen. Five inches would have been very interesting. However, seeing the trees blooming and the vegies growing is so good!

But this year has been a year of change and sadness as we farewelled Fred's Mum, Rose. She died just after Easter and leaves a large gap in our lives. We also said final goodbyes in Brisbane to our friend Kathy. This photo of Kathy and Rose illustrates two very special people who enjoyed life and loved to laugh.



We looked at the earth with "the eye of wonder". (it is a quote from my unwritten book!) We snorkelled on Brampton Island and saw wonders we had never even dreamt of. We now have the books to identify fish corals and other things, and need to return to the reef. We saw and heard whales off Eden. Now my ambition is to watch whales, and see them watching me! (I did not see their eyes at all on that trip.) This whale nearly swam under the boat. Long, slow breaststroke. They are big heavy bodies to move through the water! (unlike dolphins)



But the real wonder was watching mudlarks (pee wees) in the tree at church. They made the nest, very meticulously placing small bits of mud. It took so long they may have been mixing mud and saliva. The nest has survived numerous downpours. They laid eggs, changing sittings regularly and checking (turning) the eggs each time they changed. The youngsters (two) hatched and fledged, and have now flown off into the rectory garden. There are photos of every phase!



Linda went to conferences with Anglican Deacons and with University Chaplains from around Australia. Times for deep thought! Next year might see more work at the university. (If my body allows.)

We are both well but a year older. A new car, vacuum cleaner and refrigerator have dragged us into the 21st century. (they also use less electricity and fuel.) We produce more electricity now with new panels and hope that is used by our neighbours. It won't stop the coal from being burnt though!

Our hopes for next year are that the world will be seen with "the eye of wonder"; cherished and healed.

To see the world in a grain of sand
and heaven in a wild flower,
hold infinity in the palm of your hand
and eternity in an hour

William Blake

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Every star shall sing a carol
Every creature high and low,
Come and praise the King of Heaven
By whatever name you know.
God above, man below
Holy is the name I know.

When the king of all creation
Had a cradle on the Earth,
Holy was the human body
And the day that gave him birth.
God above, man below
Holy is the name I know.

Who can tell how many crosses,
Still to come or long ago,
Crucify the king of heaven ?
Holy is the name I know.
God above, man below
Holy is the name I know.

Who can tell what other cradle
High above the Milky Way
Still may rock the king of heaven
On another Christmas Day?
God above, man below
Holy is the name I know.

Every creature he will gather,
All shall know him for their own.
I will praise the son of Mary,
Brother of my blood and bone.
God above, man below
Holy is the name I know.

Every star and every planet,
Every creature high or low,
Sing the everlasting carol:
Holy is the name I know.
God above, man below
Holy is the name I know.

Sydney Carter