



# Hope for the world

## Living In The Rhythms Of Mother Earth

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The Season of Advent brings together the Church's annual seasonal celebration of the Christian hope with the darkest time of year in the Northern Hemisphere when the sun in its yearly rising and falling offers the least light and warmth to the earth and its creatures.

Advent prepares us for the birth of the Incarnate Christ which is celebrated around the Northern winter solstice which marks the shortest day and the longest night. All gardeners and farmers know the effect of varying insolation on the growing cycle of plants.

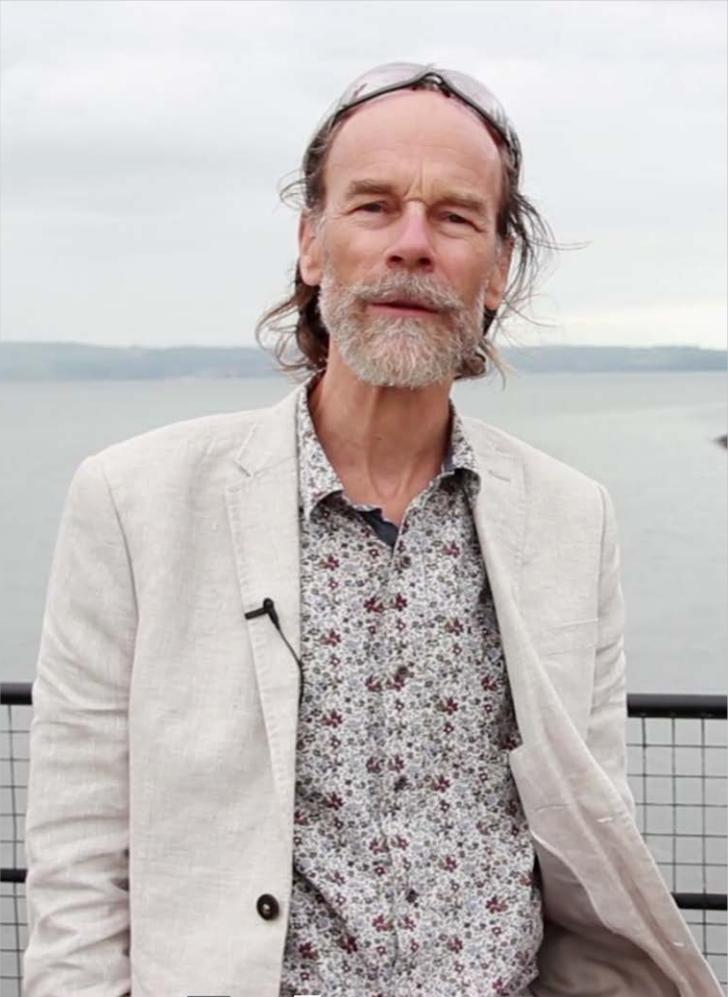
By mapping the events in the life of Christ onto the agricultural year, the Church linked the wonderful cycle of nature's decay, death, and rising to new life, onto the worship of the Church. The Church did this because Christ is described in the scriptures as the 'sun of righteousness'; as the logos, the inner principle of all Creation; and as the one in whom 'all things, whether on earth or in heaven' are reconciled to God 'by the blood of his cross' and by his rising again.

As we approach Christmas 2015 we recall that it has been a year of momentous events in the human stewardship of life on earth. The year included the publication of the powerful Encyclical of Pope Francis 'Praesidium' in which he expressed the hope that governments, businesses and citizens would repair the wasteful desecration of Mother Earth by the industrial economy.

And it included the Paris conference on climate change when the nations came together to attempt to find a solution to the threat that waste industrial gases will destabilise the climate.

The source of my hope that we will begin to turn from the destruction and degradation of nature to its repair and renewal is the Incarnate, Crucified and Risen Christ in whom God already has revealed the destiny of the whole creation, and all creatures, towards their unitive restoration with the love of God. And it is my regular participation in the cycle of life's renewal that makes this restoration a reality in my own daily life.

As the sun begins to rise in the sky, and the period of sunlight to increase, I and my wife will begin to sow seeds on the window sill in our cottage, in preparation for the spring, so that when the sun rises higher in the sky the small plants will be ready to be planted out and so turn over spring and summer and autumn into pumpkins, cabbages, sprouts and kale that will feed us into the autumn and winter as the days start to shorten once again, and life's wondrous rhythm of decay and rebirth starts over again.



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[advent.arocha.org.uk](http://advent.arocha.org.uk) (Michael Northcott - 19th December)



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