

Granby United Church- Message for the New Year 2012

Was 2011 a good year? And what will 2012 be like?

In order to answer the first question, let us list some of the major events that happened during the past year. We faced a series of crisis : here at home, the crisis of corruption and the implementation of Board of inquiry by the Government; in Europe, the unfinished crisis of the euro and the implementation of drastic financial measures which caused the immense “Occupy” movement in more than one hundred cities worldwide; also, the “Arabic Spring” this vast revolutionary movement which “has brought down powerful dictators from their thrones” (Luke 1:52); and finally, the extreme food crisis , that we spoke very little of, in the Horn of Africa... Do we need to remind ourselves that there are still more than one billion people starving on earth?

This situation reminds me that from an ecological point of view, we have not made much progress in 2011: a tsunami, which is a natural phenomena caused a major nuclear accident in Japan; a hurricane, Irene, caused immense damage to the American east coast; a big storm, Washi, killed 1,200 people in the Philippines; unprecedented floods in the Richelieu Valley; devastating forest fires in the East of the continent – the month of July was the hottest ever, and Autumn 2011 was the warmest in history; but maybe THE disaster of the year was the unjustifiable decision, immediately after the unsuccessful Conference of Durban, from the Canadian Government to abandon the Kyoto Agreement whose goal is to control climate change by reducing the greenhouse effect gas production.

You could ask me how this is all related to our faith ???

It is very simple! The God we believe in is a God of justice and peace, a God caring for Creation, and for all creatures, human beings, animals and plants, who live on it, and we need to do the same. This should be our very first motivation in the year to come: to be concerned and active about the destiny of our neighbours and at the same time about the situation of our beautiful home, Earth, that God has given us. We cannot stay indifferent, apathetic or only self-centered.

In order for the coming year to be better than the previous one, let us be aware in 2012 of the environmental problems threatening life itself; let us be aware of the fate of Christian communities, victims of discrimination in countries like Egypt, Nigeria, Soudan...

David Fines