

The explanation for this is found in John 3:16 which says ~

For
God
so loved the world,
that He gave His only begotten Son,
that
whosoever
believeth in
Him should
not perish,
but have
everlasting
Life.
JOHN 3:16

Maybe that is why we use the "X" as the symbol of a kiss ~ but remember a kiss can be a tool of betrayal as well as a gift given in love.

All our readings today remind us of that gift given in love ~ Isaiah says that we have walked in darkness but are to be given a great light ~ Christ the Light of the World.

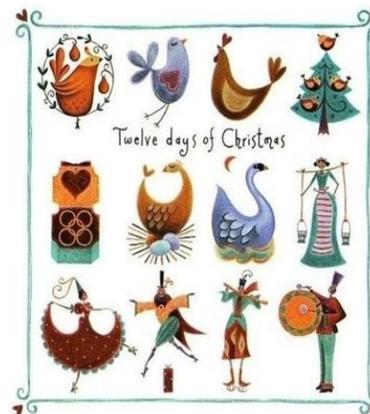
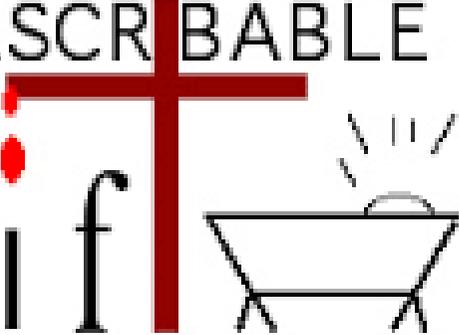
Titus tells us of that the Grace of God that appeared so that we can all have Salvation. With Grace we can say NO to ungodliness because we are God's children.

Luke records that Grace~ that Gift of Love ~ coming to us as both God and human ~ arriving in poor circumstances and yet being King and Messiah! It tells of how the first witnesses to Jesus' birth respond when they are told and see for themselves !

You and I have been told ~ and this is Xmas ~ pronounced Christmas we are invited to receive that gift again and to celebrate ~ using all the symbols at our disposal ~ including Candy Canes ~ Christ the Good Shepherd ~ will you receive Christ today ~ I pray so. Amen.

Ministry Musings Christmas Blessings

INDESCRIBABLE
Gift



Babe in a manger or a bird in a tree ~ celebrate Christmas ~ but what do you see?

2 turtle doves ~ the Old and New Testament.

3 French hens ~ Faith, Hope and Charity.

4 Calling birds ~ The four Gospels and/or the four Evangelists.

5 Golden rings ~ The first five books of the Old Testament ~ the "Pentateuch".

6 Geese a-laying ~ the six days of creation.

7 Swans a swimming ~ the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit ~ (Roman Catholic the seven sacraments).

8 Maids a milking ~ the eight Beatitudes.

9 Ladies dancing ~ the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

10 Lords a-leaping ~ the ten Commandments.

11 Piper piping ~ the eleven faithful apostles.

12 Drummers drumming ~ the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles Creed.

Give thanks this Christmastide that we do not have to 'hide our faith' but can admit to '**Knowing Jesus ~ Making Him known**'.

Isaiah 9: 2-7 OT page 648
Titus 2: 11-14 NT page 212
Luke 2: 1-14(15-20) NT page 55

Christmas Blessings ! If you were singing carols under the tree on the Common at the beginning of the month you can probably help me with this mornings thought!

I don't know about you but I don't much like abbreviations or pictures used in messages. My pet hate is anything that uses a heart shape for love "I heart Streatham" instead of I love Streatham etc! Or at this time of year Xmas instead of Christmas!

I ♥
YOU



But lets think about the Xmas image for a minute.
It is thought that it has been in use for thousands of years!

χΧ

X is the 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet and is pronounced Chi ~ it came to be used for the symbol for Christ from about

the mid 1500's.

Χριστός

You may recognise it as the "Jesus Fish" the Ichthus that you see on cars or worn on coat lapels, which was the symbol that Christians meeting in secret would put on their house gates to show other believers where they were gathering.



It is also found in another Christians symbol ~ the Chi Rho ~ which has come to symbolise ~ Jesus Christ Risen and Glorified!



There is an image on our Open Door that reminds us that without Christmas we cannot have Easter ! The cross is the symbol of the gift of Love God offers each of us as Faith.

